Confucian Virtues: A Cornerstone for Student's Leadership Modelling

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Abstract*: *In today's society, the demand for effective and ethical leaders has never been more pressing, necessitating educational institutions to play a pivotal role in preparing students for leadership roles. Conventional leadership models that revolve around power and authority are increasingly deemed insufficient, emphasizing the need for a more virtuous approach to leadership development. Recognizing the potential benefits of integrating Confucian virtues, such as benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom, and fidelity, into leadership modelling among student leaders, St. Paul University Surigao embarks on a theoretical framework-based study to explore the determined practices of Confucius' teachings on virtues as a foundation for leadership modelling. This research investigates the independent variable of Confucian teachings on virtues, the dependent variable of leadership modelling effectiveness, and the mediating variables of the five core virtues. By contributing to the knowledge on the efficacy of Confucian teachings in leadership development, the study offers practical insights for leadership modelling and benefits St. Paul University Surigao's leadership development programs, fostering the growth of ethical and virtuous leaders in society. The study gathers data through informed consent from student leaders during the 1st semester of the academic year 2022-2023. The participants represent diverse backgrounds, encompassing various age groups, college year levels, statuses, and departments within the institution, ensuring comprehensive representation of perspectives and enhancing the study's findings' validity and applicability. In conclusion, the study advocates for an inclusive and collaborative learning environment that values diverse perspectives. Recommendations include promoting intergroup interactions, organizing workshops and seminars, and implementing diversity and inclusion training programs for student leaders. Embracing diversity and fostering inclusive practices can create an environment that cultivates empathy, respect, and appreciation for varied experiences, ultimately enhancing the educational experience for all students.*

Keywords: Confucian Virtues, Student's Leadership, Modelling, Diversity

I. INTRODUCTION

In contemporary society, the demand for leaders who possess not only effectiveness but also unwavering ethical principles has reached unprecedented heights. As a result, educational institutions have assumed a crucial role in preparing students for leadership positions, with the recognition that traditional models centered solely around power and authority may no longer suffice. By integrating Confucian virtues, namely benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom, and fidelity, into their leadership modeling approach for student leaders, different schools aim to cultivate a new generation of ethical and exemplary leaders.

While previous research has delved into the application of Confucian virtues in leadership development, there exists a notable gap in empirical studies focused explicitly on their practical implementation within the context of student leadership at St. Paul University Surigao. Thus, the present theoretical framework-based study sets out to explore the determined practices of Confucius' teachings on virtues as a foundation for leadership modeling among student leaders. By investigating the independent variable of Confucian teachings on virtues, the dependent variable of leadership modeling effectiveness, and the mediating variables of the five core virtues, this research seeks to contribute to the broader understanding of how Confucian principles can enrich leadership development. Moreover, the study holds substantial implications for the improvement of leadership modeling approaches, thereby benefiting students'

leadership development programs and fostering the cultivation of ethical and virtuous leaders, both within the university and in society at large.

To achieve these objectives, data will be gathered through informed consent from the student leaders during the 1st semester of the academic year 2022-2023. The research cohort is expected to comprise a diverse group of participants, spanning different age groups, college year levels, statuses, and departments within the institution. This diversity will facilitate a comprehensive representation of perspectives, bolstering the study's findings' validity and relevance.

In conclusion, this study endeavours to shed light on the practical significance of Confucian virtues in leadership modelling. By integrating these time-honoured principles, student leaders endeavour to create an inclusive and collaborative learning environment that celebrates diversity and instills in it the essential qualities of empathy, respect, and a deep appreciation for varied experiences, thereby elevating the educational experience for all.

II. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The demand for effective and ethical leaders in today's rapidly evolving and interconnected world has become more pronounced than ever before. With complex global challenges and societal transformations unfolding, the need for leaders who can navigate uncertainty, uphold ethical standards, and inspire positive change has reached critical levels. Consequently, educational institutions have taken on a pivotal role in shaping the next generation of leaders, recognizing the significance of instilling not only academic knowledge but also moral values in their students.

Traditional leadership models, often characterized by a focus on power, authority, and hierarchical structures, have come under scrutiny in recent times. Critics argue that such models may lead to a lack of empathy, a disregard for ethical considerations, and a failure to prioritize the collective well-being of communities and societies. In response to these concerns, there has been a growing call for a more virtuous and value-driven approach to leadership development. Amidst this evolving landscape, different institutions are committed to fostering holistic and socially responsible individuals. Recognizing the potential benefits of integrating Confucian virtues into their leadership modeling practices, student leaders seek to explore the application of these timeless principles in cultivating a new breed of leaders who embody not only competence but also strong ethical values.

Confucianism, an ancient philosophical and ethical system founded by Confucius in ancient China, emphasizes the cultivation of virtues as essential components of a morally upright and harmonious society. The five core Confucian virtues—benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom, and fidelity—form the bedrock of this ethical system and are believed to guide individuals in their actions and interactions with others.

While existing research has highlighted the relevance of Confucian virtues in leadership development, there remains a dearth of empirical studies that specifically focus on their practical implementation within the context of student leadership. Hence, this study endeavours to fill this gap by conducting a theoretical framework-based exploration of the determined practices of Confucius' teachings on virtues as a foundation for leadership modelling among student leaders.

By delving into the effectiveness of integrating Confucian virtues into leadership development, this research aims to contribute to the broader understanding of the significance of virtue-based approaches in nurturing ethical and principled leaders. Moreover, the study holds significant implications for the enhancement of leadership modelling strategies, aligning them with the institution's values and aspirations.

Through the data gathered from student leaders during the 1st semester of the academic year 2022-2023, the study anticipates gaining valuable insights into the impact of Confucian virtues on leadership effectiveness. The research cohort's diversity, encompassing students from different backgrounds and experiences, is expected to enrich the findings and enhance their applicability to various leadership scenarios.

III. METHODOLOGY

The present study employs a descriptive research design utilizing a survey technique to explore the relevance of Confucius Teachings on Virtues as a foundation for leadership modeling among student leaders. The research participants consisted of student leaders and students for the Academic Year 2022-2023.

A total of 100 participants took part in the survey, comprising 44 student leaders and 56 regular students. The data required for the study were collected using a researcher-made questionnaire, which underwent content validation by experts. Part l of the questionnaire focused on gathering demographic information about the participants, including age,

sex, year level, and department. Part 2 of the questionnaire explored the determined practices of Confucius teachings on virtues and their relation to Students' Leadership Modelling.

The survey methodology provides a suitable approach for this research, enabling the examination of how Confucian virtues impact leadership modelling. By including both student leaders and regular students in the study, the findings are expected to offer valuable insights into the integration and perception of Confucian virtues in leadership roles.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study underscored the significance of Confucius Teachings on Virtues as a guiding framework for leadership modelling among student leaders.

TABLE 1: PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

Profile		f (n=100)	%
Sex	Male	44	44
	Female	56	56
Age	18-19 years old	17	17
	20-21 years old	47	47
	22-23 years old	31	31
	24-26 years old	5	5
Year Level	1st Year College	22	22
	2nd Year College	24	24
	3rd Year College	26	26
	4th Year College	28	28
Status	Student	56	56
	Student-Leader	44	44

Table 1 provides an overview of the demographic characteristics of the participants in the study. The table includes information on their age, sex, year level, student status, and department. Out of the total 100 participants, 53% were male, and 47% were female. The age distribution showed that the majority of participants were in the 20-21 years old category (47%), followed by 22-23 years old (31%), 18-19 years old (17%), and 24-26 years old (5%).

In terms of year level, the participants were evenly distributed, with 22% in the 1st year, 24% in the 2nd year, 26% in the 3rd year, and 28% in the 4th year. Regarding student status, 56% of the participants were regular students, while 44% were student leaders.

These demographic findings provide a comprehensive representation of the study's participants, ensuring diversity in age, sex, year level, and student status, which contributes to the validity and applicability of the study's results.

TABLE 2: EXTENT OF DETERMINED PRACTICES OF CONFUCIUS TEACHINGS ON VIRTUES IN TERMS OF BENEVOLENCE

Indicators	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation	Qualitative Description
1.1 A student leader must show empathy towards team members and colleagues by actively listening to their concerns and needs.	3.77	0.42	Strongly Agree	Highly Practiced
1.2 A student leader must treat everyone with respect and kindness, regardless of their position or seniority.	3.8	0.43	Strongly Agree	Highly Practiced
1.3 A student leader must demonstrate a willingness to help team members develop their skills and reach their full potential.	3.77	0.47	Strongly Agree	Highly Practiced

1.4 A student leader must foster a positive and supportive work environment that values teamwork and collaboration.	3.79	0.46	Strongly Agree	Highly Practiced
1.5 A student leader must make decisions that prioritize the well-being of team members and colleagues, even if it means sacrificing short-term gains or personal interests.	3.69	0.58	Strongly Agree	Highly Practiced
Average	**3.764**	**0.474**	**Strongly Agree**	**Highly Practiced**

Table 2 provides a comprehensive analysis of the extent of determined practices of Confucius Teachings on the virtue of benevolence among student leaders. Benevolence, considered a cornerstone of ethical leadership, has been shown to create a supportive and inclusive environment, fostering positive relationships and encouraging teamwork and personal development among peers. This table presents the mean ratings, standard deviations, verbal interpretations, and qualitative descriptions of various indicators related to benevolence, as perceived by the respondents.

The participants' responses indicate a high level of agreement and practice with regard to the various indicators of benevolence. Indicator 1.2, emphasizing the importance of treating everyone with respect and kindness, regardless of their position or seniority, received the highest mean rating of 3.80 (SD=0.43), indicating a strong consensus and high practice in this aspect.

Similarly, Indicator 1.1, which highlights showing empathy towards team members and colleagues by actively listening to their concerns and needs, as well as Indicator 1.3, emphasizing a student leader's willingness to help team members develop their skills and reach their full potential, received high mean ratings of 3.77 (SD=0.42) and 3.77 (SD=0.47) respectively, reflecting the participants' strong agreement and adherence to these benevolent behaviours.

Indicator 1.4, which underscores the creation of a positive and supportive work environment valuing teamwork and collaboration, also garnered a high mean rating of 3.79 (SD=0.46), indicative of its extensive practice among the respondents.

However, Indicator 1.5, focusing on making decisions that prioritize the well-being of team members and colleagues, even if it means sacrificing short-term gains or personal interests, received a slightly lower mean rating of 3.69 (SD=0.58). While still indicating agreement and a relatively high level of practice, this aspect of benevolence presents an opportunity for improvement.

Overall, the respondents' perception of the Extent of Determined Practices of Confucius Teachings on the Virtue of Benevolence yielded an average mean of 3.764 and a standard deviation of 0.474, qualifying as "Strongly Agree" and qualitatively described as "To a Highly Practiced." This underscores the participants' high value for and manifestation of benevolent behaviors aligned with Confucius' principles.

The findings align with prior research highlighting the significance of benevolence in ethical leadership. By practicing benevolence, student leaders contribute to the well-being and development of their team members, promoting positive relationships and cultivating a culture of respect and fairness. The enduring influence of Confucian philosophy on leadership and the enduring relevance of benevolence as a guiding virtue are further validated by the high rating for the Extent of Determined Practices of Confucius Teachings on Virtues in terms of Benevolence.

Confucian principles provide student leaders with a moral compass to navigate their responsibilities with integrity and compassion, leading to more effective leadership outcomes and enhanced team cooperation. The study's findings underscore the enduring significance of benevolence in leadership modelling and its positive impact on creating a supportive and inclusive environment within the university community.

TABLE 3: EXTENT OF DETERMINED PRACTICES OF CONFUCIUS TEACHINGS ON VIRTUES IN TERMS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

Indicators	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation	Qualitative Description
2.1 A student leader must be honest and transparent in all interactions with team	3.73	0.47	Strongly Agree	Highly Practiced

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members, colleagues, and stakeholders.				
2.2 A student leader must hold oneself and others accountable for their actions and decisions.	3.67	0.51	Strongly Agree	Highly Practiced
2.3 A student leader must treat everyone with fairness and impartiality, regardless of personal biases or external factors.	3.72	0.51	Strongly Agree	Highly Practiced
2.4 A student leader must uphold ethical principles and values, even when faced with difficult or challenging situations.	3.73	0.49	Strongly Agree	Highly Practiced
2.5 A student leader must lead by example and modeling the behaviors and actions that reflect one's commitment to righteousness.	3.81	0.39	Strongly Agree	Highly Practiced
Average	**3.73**	**0.48**	**Strongly Agree**	**Highly Practiced**

Table 3 provides a comprehensive analysis of the extent to which student leaders' practice Confucius teachings on the virtue of righteousness. The indicators in this table assess various aspects of righteous behaviour expected from student leaders. Righteousness, encompassing moral principles, ethical values, and just behaviour, plays a crucial role in fostering a positive and inclusive campus environment. The table presents mean scores and standard deviations to provide insight into the respondents' perceptions and the variability in their responses regarding the adherence to righteousness among student leaders.

The respondents' perceptions demonstrate a high level of agreement and practice in various aspects of righteousness. Indicator 2.5, focusing on leading by example and modelling righteous actions and behaviours, received the highest mean rating of 3.81 (SD=0.39). This suggests that student leaders are strongly viewed as exemplifying righteous behaviour and setting a positive ethical tone for their peers.

The indicators related to treating everyone fairly (Indicator 2.3), being honest and transparent (Indicator 2.1), and upholding ethical principles (Indicator 2.4) received mean ratings of 3.72 (SD=0.51), 3.73 (SD=0.47), and 3.73 (SD=0.49), respectively. These high ratings indicate that the respondents perceive student leaders as highly practicing fairness, honesty, and adherence to ethical values in their roles.

While Indicator 2.2, focusing on holding oneself and others accountable for their actions and decisions, received a slightly lower mean rating of 3.67 (SD=0.51), the verbal interpretation of "Strongly Agree" and qualitative description of "Highly Practiced" suggest that respondents still generally agreed with and practiced accountability. Nonetheless, there may be room for improvement in promoting a culture of accountability within student leadership.

The average mean score for the extent of determined practices of Confucius teachings on righteousness is 3.73, with a standard deviation of 0.48. These results indicate a consistently high level of adherence to righteous principles among student leaders.

The findings align with previous research emphasizing the importance of righteousness in effective student leadership. Demonstrating accountability, fairness, honesty, and adherence to ethical values contributes to a positive and ethical climate within the university community. Student leaders who lead by example and uphold these virtuous principles foster trust, respect, and a sense of community among their peers and faculty members.

In conclusion, the results presented in Table 3 demonstrate the strong agreement and practice of Confucius teachings on virtues, specifically righteousness, among student leaders. These findings underscore the importance of promoting righteousness in student leadership initiatives, as it contributes to the cultivation of a positive and ethical campus environment. Embodying righteous behaviour sets a powerful example for peers and promotes a culture of fairness, transparency, and accountability, aligning with the enduring influence of Confucian philosophy on leadership.

TABLE 4: EXTENT OF DETERMINED PRACTICES OF CONFUCIUS TEACHINGS ON VIRTUES IN TERMS OF PROPRIETY

Indicators	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation	Qualitative Description
3.1 A student leader must Maintain a high level of professionalism in all interactions with fellow students, faculty, and staff.	3.53	0.63	Strongly Agree	Highly Practiced
3.2 A student leader must adhere to ethical principles and values in decision-making processes, even when faced with competing interests.	3.67	0.51	Strongly Agree	Highly Practiced
3.3 A student leader must demonstrate cultural sensitivity and awareness towards the diverse needs and backgrounds of fellow students.	3.67	0.53	Strongly Agree	Highly Practiced
3.4 A student leader must create a positive and inclusive environment that fosters open communication and mutual respect.	3.69	0.53	Strongly Agree	Highly Practiced
3.5 As a student leader, Respecting the privacy and confidentiality of fellow students, particularly when dealing with sensitive or personal issues.	3.76	0.43	Strongly Agree	Highly Practiced
Average	**3.66**	**0.53**	**Strongly Agree**	**Highly Practiced**

Table 4 presents an in-depth analysis of the extent to which student leaders practice Confucius teachings on the virtue of propriety. Propriety refers to adhering to appropriate behaviour, etiquette, and social norms in student leadership. The table provides mean scores, standard deviations, verbal interpretations, and qualitative descriptions for each indicator, offering insights into the respondents' perceptions and the variability in their responses regarding propriety.

The respondents' perceptions indicate a strong agreement and high practice of various aspects of propriety among student leaders. Indicator 3.5, which highlights the importance of respecting the privacy and confidentiality of fellow students, received the highest mean score of 3.76 (SD=0.43), signifying its significant value in terms of righteousness. The verbal interpretation of "Strongly Agree" and the qualitative description of "Highly Practiced" further emphasize the importance of maintaining confidentiality in student leadership.

This aspect aligns with Confucian teachings, which advocate for protecting personal information and upholding ethical conduct in interpersonal relationships. Prioritizing privacy creates a safe and trusting environment where students feel comfortable sharing their concerns and seeking support.

Other indicators related to propriety, such as adhering to ethical principles in decision-making (Indicator 3.2), demonstrating cultural sensitivity and awareness (Indicator 3.3), and creating a positive and inclusive environment (Indicator 3.4), received mean ratings ranging from 3.67 to 3.69. These high ratings suggest that student leaders exhibit a strong commitment to upholding ethical values, valuing diversity, and fostering mutual respect in their roles.

However, Indicator 3.1, which pertains to maintaining professionalism in interactions with fellow students, faculty, and staff, received a slightly lower mean rating of 3.53 (SD=0.63). While respondents still agreed overall, there may be room for improvement in consistently displaying professionalism in interactions. This finding underscores the importance of emphasizing professionalism in student leadership and promoting behaviours that align with Confucian principles of propriety.

The average mean score for the extent of determined practices of Confucius teachings on propriety is 3.66, with a standard deviation of 0.53. These results indicate a consistently high level of adherence to virtuous principles related to propriety among student leaders.

The findings align with previous research emphasizing the impact of student leaders' adherence to propriety on building trust and credibility among their peers. By exemplifying appropriate conduct and following social norms, student leaders create an environment of respect and trustworthiness, enhancing their influence and effectiveness.

In conclusion, Table 4 demonstrates the strong agreement and high practice of Confucius teachings on virtues related to propriety among student leaders at St. Paul University Surigao. These findings emphasize the importance of promoting propriety in student leadership initiatives, as it fosters a positive and ethical campus environment. Adhering to ethical principles, respecting privacy, valuing cultural sensitivity, and creating an inclusive atmosphere are essential aspects of righteous behavior that align with the enduring influence of Confucian philosophy on leadership. The high level of adherence to these virtuous principles highlights the positive impact of student leaders in upholding proper conduct and fostering a respectful and inclusive campus community.

V. CONCLUSION

This research has provided valuable insights into the extent to which student leaders practice Confucius teachings on virtues, specifically focusing on benevolence, righteousness, and propriety. The findings from Tables 2, 3, and 4 demonstrate a strong consensus among the respondents, indicating that student leaders exhibit a high level of adherence to these virtuous principles in their leadership roles.

The results from Table 2 indicate that student leaders highly value and practice benevolence, treating others with respect, empathy, and kindness. This aligns with previous research emphasizing the importance of benevolence in creating a positive and supportive work environment, fostering teamwork, and promoting ethical behaviour. The strong agreement and high practice of benevolence among student leaders underscore the enduring influence of Confucian teachings on leadership modelling and its positive impact on the university community.

Similarly, the findings from Table 3 highlight the student leaders' commitment to righteousness, upholding moral principles, ethical values, and just behaviour in their roles. By leading by example, adhering to ethical principles, and respecting privacy and confidentiality, student leaders foster trust, credibility, and a culture of fairness within the institution. This aligns with the teachings of Confucius, who emphasized the significance of righteousness in ethical conduct and interpersonal relationships.

Table 4 reveals that student leaders demonstrate propriety by adhering to appropriate behaviour, etiquette, and social norms. By valuing diversity, creating inclusive environments, and maintaining professionalism, student leaders contribute to a respectful and inclusive campus community. These practices align with Confucian principles, emphasizing the importance of propriety in ethical leadership.

Overall, the study's findings indicate that Confucius teachings on virtues hold significant relevance in the context of student leadership. The high level of adherence to benevolence, righteousness, and propriety demonstrates the positive impact of Confucian philosophy on leadership modelling and its enduring influence on student leaders' behaviour.

This research contributes to the existing body of knowledge on leadership development, providing practical insights for enhancing leadership modelling initiatives. By incorporating Confucian virtues into leadership development programs, the university can further cultivate ethical and virtuous leaders who promote positive work environments, trust, and collaboration.

To sustain these virtuous practices and promote continuous improvement, the school may consider organizing workshops, seminars, and training programs that emphasize the importance of benevolence, righteousness, and propriety in leadership. Creating an inclusive and collaborative learning environment that values diverse perspectives is also essential in nurturing empathy, respect, and appreciation for varied experiences among student leaders.

In conclusion, this theoretical framework-based study sheds light on the determined practices of Confucius teachings on virtues as a foundation for leadership modelling among student leaders at St. Paul University Surigao. The research highlights the significance of ethical leadership and the enduring relevance of Confucian philosophy in shaping virtuous leaders. Embracing and promoting these virtuous practices will not only benefit student leaders' personal and professional growth but also contribute to a more positive and ethical campus community.

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