BOSS OR BOSSING: PERCEPTION OF BALIWAGEÑO EMPLOYEES TO THEIR MANAGERS

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Abstract - This study aims to introduce the concept of 'bossing' as leadership style which is a Filipino trademark. This study is in search for authentic Filipino Leadership Style. The word 'bossing' which is popularly used in the Philippines, came from the western concept of 'boss'. It may pertain to the manager, but the word 'boss and bossing' have different connotation. The researcher find out that there are significant differences on the perception of the employees on the usage of term 'boss' and 'bossing'.

The respondents of this study are the employees from Baliwag Transit Inc (BTI) that holds office in Baliwag, Bulacan. This used the quantitative research. Also, this research used the Descriptive Comparative research method. The data gathering procedures were conducted through questionnaires, checklist, and interview framework.

Index Terms - Bossing, Filipino Leadership, Baliwageno, Leadership

I. INTRODUCTION

Numerous studies about different management theories were published. Despite this, there are only few and selected studies about Filipino leadership style. This was also the observation of the writer, Regina Reyes (Reyes, 2013). In her article Challenge to Local Heads: Developing a Filipino Brand of Leadership, she noted and asked "many Filipinos are trained in Western Theories of management and leadership. But are these theories applicable within the context of Filipino culture?". In the remark of Reyes, it is time to seek of a management concept that can be marked as a true Filipino leadership brand. The well-known Filipino anthropologist and writer F. Landa Jocano also gives notations regarding Filipino way of management. He mentioned that the principles taught by the business guru, Peter Drucker, have limitations. As per analysis of Jocano, the propositions taught by Drucker are good for the manager and employee considering that those may be sourced from one or same culture such as the United States and Great Britain. However, if this will be implemented to the workers with diverse culture, especially in the Philippines and other poverty-stricken nations, Drucker's "management by objective" will be difficult. (Jocano L 2006.)

In 1991, Robert J. House of Wharton School of Business – University of Pennsylvania established the Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness (GLOBE) Research Program. The results of their study show that effective management depends on societal and organizational norms, values, and belief system of their administration (Center for Creative Leadership). Filipinos have their own and distinct culture, have their own work methods. This concept was attested by Edward Hall, an expert anthropologist. In his study, he proposes two kinds of communication: "high context culture" and "low context culture". According to Hall, countries who have "high context culture" like the Philippines, Lebanon, Thailand, Japan, and India, do not practice detail-oriented communication, same goes with their way of writing or expressing formal information. Discursive and not straightforward to what they intend to say, they leave to whom they talk the message they want to deliver. Americans, Australians, and British are the opposites as they are direct, straightforward, and clear with their way of discourse. (Kotabe & Helsen 2007). They mean what they say.

Origin of Bossing

In the Philippines, slang word to address the superior is the title bossing.. As I vividly recall, the word 'bossing' was first used in the sitcom show "Okay Ka, Fairy Ko" which was starred by Vic Sotto as Enteng Kabisote. This sitcom was first aired circa 1987, and the character of Amy, characterized by Ruby Rodriguez who portrayed as the talkative maid but trusted by the Kabisote family, was the first to use the term 'bossing'. After three decades, the word 'bossing' is still dominant and widely used. Based on etymology, one can conclude that the word bossing came from the western terminology of boss. However, 'bossing' has a special flavor for the Filipinos.

There is no exact 'bossing' word in the UP Filipino Dictionary by Virgilio Almario. Almario is one of the most respected Filipino linguist. Although from the aforementioned dictionary, the term was used in English language sentence: 'Who is bossing (in charge of) this work? (Sino ang namumuno (nangangasiwa, namamahala) sa trabahong ito?) (University of the Philippines Center for Filipino Language, 2010). His 'bossing' is same as 'bossing' in English language term, which comes from the root word 'boss'

The term 'bossing' had once been nominated as Word of the Year 2014. It was passed by Frederick Perez. In an interview, he described bossing as an informal label to a head, spouse, or those working in the public service industry. "This was embraced (bossing) by the Filipinos from Aparri to Jolo", Perez added. (Sawikaan, 2014)

The Baliwag Transit

The Baliwag Transit is recognized as transporation 'flag carrier' of the town of Baliwag, in the province of Bulacan. Started with two (2) buses in 1950, Baliwag Transit Inc., is developed by Victoria Santiago VDA de Tengco. The experience and struggles by Turing (her nickname) was not ordinary. She once helped her aunt's cloth business in Cabanatuan City when she was only 17 years old. On that same town, she met Jose Tengco, her husband, who was hailed from Malolos City, Bulacan. They have decided to get married at their young age and resided in Baliwag where vulcanizing business was their primary source of income.

Through their hard work and perseverance, they achieved success in different fields of trading. (Villacorte, Baliwag Then and Now (3rd Edition), 2001). In an unfortunate event, Turing early get widowed by her husband after an accidental death. She was only 22 that time, left with three children: Joselito, Edilberto, and Josefina (Villacorte, Baliwag Then and Now, 1970). Since then, Turing has known as the Viyuda (Widow) of Baliwag.Currently, the company has an estimated 500 buses and is under the active supervision of Manager Joselito 'Lito' Tengco, as the General Manager cum President, and Manager Edilberto 'Eboy' Tengco as the Vice President for Operations. Since then employees of Baliwag Transit used to call them as managers.

Statement of the Problem

In this study, the researcher seeks to determine if there's any difference in perception on the usage of 'boss' at 'bossing'. Particularly, this aims to know the following:

1. What is the profile of the Baliwageno employees?
2. Who uses the term Boss and Bossing?
3. When do they use the terms Boss and Bossing?
4. Is there significant difference between the characteristics of a Boss and a Bossing as per the perception of Baliwageno employees?
5. What is the implication of this study in the private companies in Baliwag?

Statement of the Objectives

The objective of this research in to develop the concept of 'bossing' as leadership that may be branded as truly Filipino. This will also contribute to few studies about Filipino Brand of Leadership.

II. METHODOLOGY

Data Gathering Procedures

This study used the Descriptive Comparative research design method. The descriptive comparative is frequently used on the first phase of forming and advancing of new researches. This helps the researchers to advance from initial part of 'exploratory case studies' towards more complex levels of different theoretical model.

The statistical treatment of data used the following: "median", "mode", and "Inter Quartile Range (IQR)". Median is the response that is can be seen in the middle of the distribution and the assumption as the 'possible response' of a usual respondent. Mode is considered the most frequent response. In assumption, the median is the response believed by the respondent while the mode shows the most frequent response. The interquartile range is the measurement of how the responses were scattered. This is the dispersion variance. As what Kostoulas said, "it shows whether the responses are clustered together or scattered across the range of possible responses". In his (Kostoulas, 2014) assumption, "a relatively small IQR, is an indication of consensus. By contrast, larger IQRs might suggest that opinion is polarized, i.e. that your respondent tend to hold strong opinions either for or against the topic".

Data were gathered from the survey questionnaire answers of the 100 participating employees of Baliwag Transit Inc. Employees of Baliwag Transit were divided into two groups: Office Staff and Operation Staff (included by drivers and bus conductors). There are almost 50 office staff in Baliwag Transit and the researcher was able to gather 25 respondents. From the operation department, 70 buses are operating from Baliwag trip to Cubao and Grace Park. Every bus has 1 driver and conductor. In 140 employees under the operations, 75 respondents were gathered. Before the survey was floated, permissions from the Office of the President and Vice President for Operations were asked. The researcher purposely went to the terminal and office for the respondents of the survey.

The data gathering process was accomplished through survey. Instruments and measurements used in questionnaires were Likert scale and checklist. The survey questionnaire is composed of two parts. First part aims to determine the demographic profile of the respondents. Second part is consisting of open-ended questions to determine the personal perception in the difference or similarity of 'boss' and 'bossing'. The researcher decided to know first their initial perception before giving the checklist of comparison between characteristics of boss and bossing that will form the third part. Afterward, all data were

summarized and examine through quantitative means.

III. RESULTS

Part of the survey is an open discussion on the perception of employees about the use of 'boss' and 'bossing'. After the questions that sought respondents' profile, 'open-ended' questions immediately followed which gathered insights if the usage of 'boss' and 'bossing' differ or the same. Out of 100 respondents, 54 have answered. In 54 answers, 19 replied that boss and bossing is same while 35 have their own interpretation. Some of their comments are, "both (boss and bossing) corresponds to high rankings", "both are leaders", "boss is higher than bossing", "bossing is the assistant, boss is the head", "same functions, different labels". During accomplishing the lickert scale part, most of the respondents have second thought and realize that there are difference between boss and bossing.

Majority of the respondents age 40 and below. It was represented by both the office staff and operation staff. 91% of the respondents belongs to rank and file, 6% where in supervisory and only 3% where part of managerial position. Since it is bus company, the employees are dominated by men (83%). In terms of educational attainment, 64% were combination of high school graduate and 2 year course.

Table 1. Frequently used title for other person by Baliwag Transit

	Frequency	Percent
Boss/Bossing	15	15.0
Sir/Ma'am	77	77.0
Manager	6	6.0
Brother/Sister	1	1.0
Others	1	1.0
Total	100	100.0

Employees explained to the researchers that many of them used "sir/ma'am" as sign of respect to every customer they face. Part of the Filipino culture is maintaining good social relationships and respect, even to non-relative individuals. According to Enriquez, maintaining good social relationships has two types. First, is the considered "outsider" while the second is considered as "one of us". How we consider "outsider" and "one of us" differ. Example is, he said, we are socializing to them in the perspectives of "transaction/civility with", "interaction with", "joining/participating", "in conformity/ accord with", and "being along with". In the mentioned types of maintaining social relationships, the use of "ma'am and sir" is shown to be under the perspective of good "transaction/civility with". The boss/bossing (particularly the boss), in the practice and observation of the researchers to their office, was commonly named to the children of the patriarch of BTI, while manager is named to the patriarch such as the General Manager (GM) Lito and Manager Eboy Tengco, sons of the founder of BTI.

Boss is Gender Sensitive than Bossing

The term boss is neutrally named (55%) by many to either male or female as seen in the Table 2. While on the Table 3, the word bossing was frequently labeled to men (73%). This may be influenced by Vic Sotto, a respected actor in Philippine TV, as he is known by many as the so-called bossing. Bossing is already affixed to Vic Sotto maybe because he is watched and listened to every day. In a conducted study last 2014, Filipinos were described by Aseana DNA as "second most avid watchers of television in the world". They are one of the avid television viewers, where they spent watching almost 21 hours in one week, based on the study. (Corrales 2014). Eat Bulaga, where Vic Sotto regularly appeared as on of the noontime show host, will never be out of the everyday watching habit of the Filipinos. It is considered as the longest running show in the Philippines with 40 years of program airing history. Aside from the being the longest running show, the program built solid viewership where it has recorded an average 6.38% viewership last November 2017, based on the AGB Nielsen Nationwide Urban Television Audience Management (NUTAM) survey ratings (Ching, 2017). This can be watched from Monday to Saturday in the noontime.

Table 2. The gender whom employees address more as boss

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Man	42	42.0	42.0
Woman	3	3.0	3.0
Valid Both	55	55.0	55.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0

Table 3. The gender whom employees address more as bossing

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Man	73	73.0	73.0
Woman	2	2.0	2.0
Both	25	23.0	23.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0

Employees, either of those in the office or operations, used the term 'boss' and 'bossing'. However, based on the research, there is significant difference on the use of the terms 'boss' and 'bossing' (p=.000 at p=.014) between employees in the office and in the operations. This signifies the formality and compliance to the management structure of the office workers and the informality of workers in the operations. It is safe to say that definitions are affected by the level of educational attainment. Tracing back, the general picture of workers under operations, most of them are graduates of high school and vocational course. Also, in the survey, it attested that there is significant difference on the use of boss and bossing between the college graduates and vocational course graduates.

The use of Boss and Bossing

Based on my survey, majority agrees that 'boss' is used when it comes to serious discussions and this shows recognition to the true power of the leader. One who placed higher than any in the organizational hierarchy is recognized as the boss while those in supervisory position is labeled as 'bossing'. Although 'bossing' is used when they are looking for those in the higher positions, they do not call them 'bossing' when they are in front of them.

Boss and bossing creates special connection with Filipinos. In relationships, according to Jocano, Filipinos have the concept of 'inside' and 'outside'. He said we (Filipinos) are more relax and comfortable with peers and relatives (inside). Meanwhile, we are formal and treat those 'outsiders' as visitors. We are giving them enough attention and respect as part of our hospitality. (Jocano F. L., Working with Filipinos: A cross-cultural encounter, 1999). The boss is the 'outsider' who is in the top position whereas the 'bossing' is the peer.

We do call our boss as 'bossing' when we are looking for him/her, but we call 'boss' when we are in front of him/her. This also supports the study of Jocano about the model or pattern of communication of the Filipinos. In the context of communicating, the first characteristic according to Jocano is being 'indirect, non-confrontational, and ambiguous'. Being 'indirect' does not mean to make the person we chat with lost with the topic, but because we, Filipinos, are intuitive or sensitive to other's feelings. And when we confirmed that the flow of the conversation to be positive, we start to directly convey what we want to say.

In this description, the 'boss' is for the 'outsiders'. They are the leaders whose power came from their reward, coercive, and legitimate power. On the other hand, 'bossing' is the 'insider', maybe with no formal power bestowed, but recognized by peers because of expertise and personal qualities.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that based on respondents' response, boss and bossing is two different thing for Filipinos. 'Boss' is of western-influenced whereas 'bossing' appeals to be Filipino. Boss is more formal and structural, bossing is informal and personal. Boss can be the general attribute to the owner, chief and manager of the company, while bossing is particular to those whom the employees have direct contact or access (i.e. team leader and supervisor). One cannot play or joke around the boss, or talk to him on straight forward, whereas the bossing is one whom you eat with, drink and inter-act directly. All managers can be a boss, but they cannot be a bossing. Because a bossing is those with intimate bond with colleagues.

The use of the term boss or bossing has a direct impact on the type of relationship the employers have with their employees and subordinates. Employees feel more comfortable, if they will be allowed, to address their superiors as bossing rather than boss. Filipinos are more effective working on relationship driven organization than formal structure.

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