Membership Engagement through Membership Participation and Commitment: The Key to Organizational Stability among Professional Organizations

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to examine the factors that foster the active engagement of members in the Philippine Institute of Certified Public Accountants (PICPA), a professional organization that exists for nearly 80 years. Data were gathered from 459 respondents using both quantitative and qualitative techniques such as surveys and interviews. They were chosen using the stratified random sampling and they were located from the different parts of the country.

This study found out that the member respondents have moderate level of participation manifested through attendance in meetings, the active role they played in the organization and the duration of their participation which is on the average 15 years. However, majority of the member respondents were found to be strongly committed to the organization.

Moreover, the data suggest that social resources play a significant role in increasing member participation. As hypothesized, social resources that are mobilized by leaders increase members' participation. Social resources, in part, explain the leader's effect on member participation in a professional organization. Leadership, communication and sense of community were also found to be significant factors to members' engagement while empowerment was found to be not significant at all. This means that communication was found to be a key factor in getting people involved in an organization and in fostering their participation. In this study, e-mails and phone calls were the most frequently used methods of communication. As to the sense of community, it is a catalyst for participation.

This study then concludes that effective leadership is the key to members' commitment and commitment is a compelling factor in the organization's sustainability and a component of members' engagement.

Keywords--- Membership Engagement, Participation, Commitment, Organizational Stability, Organizations, PICPA

I. INTRODUCTION

Many people are involved in the accountancy profession, which they possess many different skills and function in many different capacities. They work in public practice, industry and commerce, education and government. All are important and each group has distinct capabilities and competencies.

The sustainability of the development of the accountancy profession can best achieved by determining the members' involvement in its activities and members' commitment to the organization. Professional organization is a group of professionals of the same academic field, like accountancy profession, who come together for the purpose of individual professional development and advancement and the profession as a whole. It represents the interests of the public to government for legislation and/or regulation and other stakeholders of the profession and ensures that its members observe the highest standards of professional and ethical conduct. It facilitates the enhancement of knowledge, skills and values throughout the members' professional careers and further responds to the needs of its members and maintains the legitimate rights of its members.

Major challenges faced by the organization is keep its status as an accredited professional organization wherein the organization has to maintain at least 20% of its membership and to reduce the type of members who pay dues but have not or less involvement with organization activities and or as an inactive members. At present, majority of the CPAs are inactive or do not have membership of PICPA or any other professional accounting sector. As of June 30, 2012, the total membership of PICPA is 109,477. Members in good

standing is 22,567 or 21% of and 86,910 or 79% are members not in good standing.

The study aimed to assess the factors that influences member's engagement that could give rise to the sustainability of the professional organization. Specifically, it aimed to determine; (1) the level of members' involvement in the organization and their commitment; (2) the respondents' assessment level of the primary factors in terms of leadership, decision making, communication and sense of community and mediating factors in relation to empowerment member satisfaction, participation benefits, and social resources; (3) the influence of the primary factors with the overall participation in and commitment of the members to the organization's activities and (4) how did the mediating variables clarify the relationship of the commitment and participation with the primary factors.

Understanding the factors that influence overall member engagement can be a platform for strategic formulation to ensure the sustainability of the organization.

II.   REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The Accountancy Profession

Professional Regulation Commission (PRC), a regulating body of the Philippine government, recognized the Philippine Institute of Certified Public Accountants (PICPA) as an accredited professional organization (APO) of CPAs. PICPA is committed to a partner in nation building by pushing various legislative measures to elevate and upgrade the accountancy profession and education into high standards. It continually ensures to have excellent professional member with global perspective and recognizes the demands upon professionals as the environment changes such as fast moving technology, liberalization of accounting practice and higher demand for improved delivery of services.

The PICPA is an active member and participant of various world's respectable accounting organizations such as the International Federation of Accountants (IFAC), International Accounting Standards Committee (IASC), Confederation of Asian and Pacific Accountants (CAPA), and the ASEAN Federation of Accountants (AF

The PICPA needs to respond to the fluidity of the environment in order to continue to fulfill the function of addressing the needs of members. On the other hand, members have obligations and responsibilities towards the sustainability of the organization. They must abide with its mandates, rules and regulation; to comply with the Continuing Professional Education mandated by the government; and to participate actively in PICPA's activities (Sec. 6 of PICPA by-laws). The PRC-Board of Accountancy requires sixty (60) units mandatory continuing professional development to CPAs to participate in continuing professional development (CPD) courses.

Concept of Member Engagement

Engaging the member in any activities is a process of influencing other members to be involved. The continuous interactions of members strengthen the emotional and psychological bonds among members which make the organization to be sustainable.

Membership in the professional organizations, aside from members benefitting from networking, education and research opportunities (Webster, C & Terawanavong, C, 2005), can also foster development of the profession and the industry where it belongs. Beddoes-Jones (2004) supports this premise "people are inherently social by nature and have always collaborated together in teams, tribes or families to achieve what individuals alone cannot".

Member engagement has always been crucial to the ultimate success of any organization. Understanding why, how, and to what degree a members engaged themselves in the organization can make all the difference when it comes to services. The level of participation can be measured by members' attendance in meetings and/or activities, the number of responsibilities assumed and degree of their involvement in discussing matters pertaining with the organization. The degree of commitment depends on how member takes care of the organization and its efforts.

Participation and commitment are deemed essential to the sustainability of the organization although other variables have to be considered in member engagement.

Concept of Member Participation

Participation can be viewed as a process of through which the involvement or contribution of member has an influence on decisions related to development activities of the organization. It provides opportunity to be a part in initiatives benefitting the profession will be make the organization sustainable and successful.

Professional organization's capacity to achieve its goals needs the involvement of the members in its activities. Members who are participating in discussions making the outcome more like to succeed as more likely commit to the agreed outcome of the discussions (Chen, L., 2004). The CPDs can be viewed as member's involvement for educational enhancement (Douglah, 1970, p. 901) and motivates them to engage in educational activities (Cervero, 1988). On the other hand, Wessel (2005) identified factors such as, cost, work and time constraints, responsibility conflicts child care issues, other family commitments, and perceived additional learning activities are non-beneficial.

Concept of Member Commitment

Commitment as defined by Porter et al.(1979) as cited by Becher (1992), as the strength of one's

identification and involvement in a certain organization. It is a psychological aspect of engagement which can be described as the belief and acceptance of the organization's goals and value; the willingness to make an effort; and the strong desire to retain the membership in the organization. It has been found to be an important aspect of the operations for the voluntary organization (Minkler (1999); a compelling factor for the sustainability of the organization; and an important element of member engagement (Kumpfer, 2005).

Member's commitment can be developed in lengthy socialization period among members, attentions accorded by the leaders and/or other members and recognition on the achievements made that will lead to member's satisfaction. The person may feel proud to be part of a group respecting its values and accomplishments.

Minkler (1999) noted that membership commitment is a key aspect of the operations of organizations, especially when they depend upon voluntary effort. Leadership and team effectiveness in organizations can be a measure of commitment through assessing the strength of member commitment to the organization and caring about the future of the organization (Chavis et al.)

Leadership

Leadership in professional organization is unique and dynamic. Leadership keeps on changing and most leaders and members serve the organization on pro-bono. Leaders are voted upon by the membership, serve the organization based on the prescribed term set by its charter, and set the tone for the year. Leaders promote organizational climate that attract members to be involved to acquire funds, mobilize resources and to resolutions (Wolff, 2001b). They encourage members to explore all points of view to resolve conflicting issues with an end in view to achieve the organization's goals and still maintaining the cohesiveness among members. They effectively advocate the perspective of the organization pertaining to issues confronting the profession with regulators, legislator and other leaders of the industry. Leaders influence members to be involved in group activities beyond the bounds of their spheres. Motivating members to achieve the desired goals and at the same time, honing their own potentials are most like to support and commit to work for the organization. Non-monetary rewards and recognitions are given to members who for and in behalf of the organization.

The sustainability of professional organization operation relies on its leaders and the commitment of the new leader to continue the existing and successful platform of the organization. Leaders must move away from a paradigm of conventional management towards a perspective and behavior that value community, partnership, autonomy and a sense of shared ownership (Nixon, 1995). There must be a willingness to change and to give up some authority.

Group leadership and the ability to ensure a continuous supply of leaders to meet organizational needs is an important component to continued organization growth (Pepe, 2007; Saslow, 2005). Leadership development programs are a key component in ensuring employee readiness to meet these challenges. A study devoted to ensuring that leadership development programs are effective in producing leaders both formal and those who practice self-leadership may be of value.

Social Resources

The credibility and display of accountability of the leaders serve as an inspiration and encouragement to be accomplished are committed to deliver results. Some leaders create a core group to get work done fast. Knowing members' potentials, capabilities, abilities and resources can contribute in implementing projects or tasks.

Along this line, professional organization has repository of intangible resources ranging from knowledgeable, reputable and skilled leaders and members, globally established professional links and social networks. In accessing these intangible resources, the critical aspect is the reciprocity of trust – the trust of the members to the leaders or and leaders to the members. Effective management of the group dynamics towards collaborative achievement can be an indicative of an increase in participation of members.

Professional organization needs tangible resources for its mobility to entice members to be involved with the organization's set goals, attendance to meetings, communicating with the members and other stakeholders with the end in view of the fulfillment of the said goals. In many instances, resources are limited that the officers need to use their own personal resources and/or own company's resources.

Organizations must develop and nurture the leadership potential of their people and must not stifle the creative instincts and energy of their people by discouraging innovation and risk-taking. In terms of increasing participation in decision-making, leaders need to examine their reluctance to delegate and they need to take on the mind-set that increased participation in decision-making will allow for the development of subordinates. They need to understand what is meant by transformational leadership. They need to compare effective and ineffective transformational leadership and must develop a self-development plan (Bass &Avolio, 1992).

Collins (2001) found this to be the case in his study of 'great' organizations (organizations that have sustained success over a minimum of fifteen years) compared to 'good' organizations. Collins made the distinction between 'effective leaders' who 'catalyze commitment to vision and standards' and 'executive leaders' who 'build enduring greatness.' This is a critical distinction. Effective leaders can get short-term results, but do not lay the foundation for continued success. Like most

aspects of sustainability, things that look like they are mutually exclusive have to be brought together. The new reality is that organizations have to show progress in relation to priorities in the short as well as long term. Our knowledge base is such that there is no excuse for failing to design and implement strategies that get short-term results. Shorter-term results are also necessary to build trust with the shareholders for longer-term investments. Michael Barber (2004) argues that it is necessary to create the virtuous circle where organization delivers results, the member gains confidence. It is for this reason that the long-term strategy requires short-term results.

There is another reason why sustainability is cyclical. It may be related to burnout, but this is not likely the main explanation. People are still putting in a lot of energy to maintain the same higher level performance represented by the new plateau. If people were burning out, performance would likely decline. A more likely explanation is that the set of strategies that brought initial success are not the ones — not powerful enough — to take us to higher levels.

While this new adaptive work is going on we would not expect achievement scores to rise in a linear fashion, and any external assessment scheme that demanded 'annual yearly progress' would be barking up the wrong tree.

Review of the literature shows that there is a relationship between leadership and participation (Butterfoss, Goodman, &Wandersman, 1996; Prestby, Wandersman, Florin, Rich, &Chavis, 1990). Studies of organizations indicate that effective management of the dynamics of group process increases participation (Butterfoss, Goodman, &Wandersman, 1993; Rogers et al., 1993). In addition, Butterfoss et al. (1996) found that participation hours outside of meetings, as well as the number roles members participated in, were related to leadership. Hayset al. (2000) and Kegler et al (1998) each assessed leadership effectiveness by examining members' perceptions of the extent to which the leader directs the group toward collaborative group achievement, encourages all points of view, and manages conflict. The challenge for organization leaders is to encourage positive communication and group decision making across the range of members' personalities, agendas, and skill sets (Hahn, Greene, & Waterman, 1994).

Participation is more likely to increase satisfaction than performance, but both may be improved. Richer (1991) concluded that job satisfaction increased substantially and productivity increased slightly with employee involvement. According to Cotton (1993), employee involvement also has the potential to improve work quality and employee attitudes. Participation can play an important role in overcoming resistance to change, in motivating workers and in community of purpose throughout the organization (Vroom &Jago, 1988). These positive outcomes may subsequently encourage employee commitment to the organization. Shedd (1 987) indicated that participation was positively associated with job satisfaction and morale, trust in school leaders, reduced stress and burnout, and reduced conflict on the job.

Despite the potentially positive effects of participation; there is a caveat. For participation to have a positive effect on employee attitudes, that participation must be meaningful. Larnmers (1967) suggested that allowing participation in decisions over which participants exercise no control may be just as damaging as no participation at all, suggesting another aspect to consider.

Wolff (2002) further notes that in community-based initiatives, the purpose of participation is to increase the community's control and ownership in improving social conditions in the community. Participation is a dependent variable in this study and is measured by the frequency with which members of the organization participated through making comments, expressing ideas at meetings, or serving as a member of a committee.

Communication

Communication is vital in any organization to be functioning. In the communication process, upward and downward communication is important to ensure that information reached to the members and stakeholders. Moreover, feedback plays a major role to assure that communication is effective.

The communication style of the leader has an effect on the willingness and eagerness of the members to share knowledge with each other. In the same vein, team members who are agreeable and extrovert in their communication style, donates and collects knowledge among members. It is worth noting that leaders communicate to people using different communication style to become effective. A leader's communication strategy varies depending upon a team's purpose, strategy and posture. Communication with teams possessing dominant market positions will likely be more formal, systematic and direct, in line with the discipline required to maintain that top position. Conversely, teams playing niches or creating completely new things will be better served by a more informal, adaptive and reflective approach major constraint for leaders will be the organization and community environment in which teams operate. Team communication nests within accepted norms.

In voluntary organization, leader's communication style determines team performance. De Vries study indicates that with supportive leaders, the followers tend to be satisfied, thus, the positive effect of the willingness of team members to share knowledge with each other will result to likelihood of satisfying the communication partner. Leadership fosters members' satisfaction and satisfied members support effective leaders.

Empowerment

Successful organizations that practice empowerment delegate tasks and/or responsibilities to team members and expect them to initiate, create, decide, and to feel ownership of the initiated tasks (Bowen and Lawler, 1992). Thus, empowerment builds positive relationships with and among members and serves as a resource of the organization particularly for the voluntary organization wherein resources are limited.

Members feel motivated and less stress knowing they have the support and resources needed to accomplish the set goals. Empowerment makes organization flexible, have better coordination, and foster belongingness among teams and with the organization (Howard, A, 1996). Leaders who share power among members and develop trust with them make the later more involve in the organization.

Members' participation is an indicative measure of empowerment. It takes a supportive environment in which to nurture people's aspirations and skills for empowerment to occur. Empowerment cannot be imposed on individuals (Beach 1996) but rather a process of building it. Leaders have to find ways to establish systems and processes that do not restrict members but rather providing opportunities to become self-managed team members, dedicated to learning, growing, and developing; and can be self-managed.

Decision Making

Decision making has no significant relationship with empowerment, thus the finding agrees to Beach (1996) that empowerment remains with the individual and cannot be imposed by others. Organizations wishing to instill a culture of empowerment must find a way of establishing systems and processes that do not restrict members. Decision making has moderate correlation with membership satisfaction, participation benefits, and social resources.

In voluntary organizations, members decide to participate based on their own volition (Butterfoss and Kegler, 2002) and cannot be imposed by others (Beach, 1996). There are circumstances that hinder members to decide to be involved in some tasks of the organization. Wessel (2005) identified deterrent factors for the non-participation of members, namely; cost, work constraints, conflicts may be between course offerings and work responsibilities, difficulty of taking time off from work in order to participate and some problems caused by child care issues, other family commitments, individual's perception about the lack of benefit from engaging in further learning activities and member's disengagement or apathy toward further education.

The study found out that active group members are more involve in policies decisions and actions than the less active group. (Prestby & Wandersman, 1985). Members who are directly involved in the organization tend to participate more. Butterfoss et al. (1996) and Kegler et al. (1998).

Sense of Community

Sense of community is perceived to be one's feeling of belongingness to a larger structure and interdependence with each other (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). It is a concept that one's identity is associated with the identity of the organization and both provide support to each other to attain the fulfilment of their needs and goals.

The similarity of academic field, interests, issues and needs can be viewed as strength of the professional organization. The organization provides an avenue where diverse members can meet to share information (Wolff, 2001a) and collectively resolve issues particularly confronting their professions. The continued involvement of the members to the organization creates a mechanism of personal identification. The more members find the connection between one's personal and professional needs and the organization's goals, the greater the likelihood of increased participation and commitment. The feeling of being integrated in the organization and continuous participation of members may develop camaraderie among members that will result to positive attitudes among themselves and shared identity of members and that of the organization.

Sense of community relates to self-efficacy, or having a belief one is able to produce levels of performance that apply influence over events that affect one's life. Further, Molix, L. A. & Nichols, C. P. (2013) shown that having esteem for one's group can be beneficial for one's well-being and can act as a kind of protective factor against stressors, enabling those with higher esteem to maintain higher wellbeing. It confirmed the studies of Chavis, et. al. that possessing a strong sense of community or a high level of identification with or esteem for one's community is associated with a variety of positive outcomes, including participation or engagement and psychological functioning. A healthy and well-functioning organization is likely to make people feel (a) able, and in possession of sufficient resources, to accomplish the goals they choose to pursue (i.e., competence), (b) free from unwanted pressure, intrusions, distractions, and outright coercion and instead able to make choices expressive of their true selves (autonomy), and (c) connected socially to a network of neighbors and friends whom one supports and from whom one receives support (relatedness). Organizational esteem could potentially influence wellbeing by promoting pursuit of activities that promote happiness.

Member Satisfactions

Kegler, Steckler, McLeroy, & Malek, (1998) stated that a way decision making influences commitment is through member satisfaction. Member satisfaction represents a global satisfaction with the work of the organization and, thus, fosters participation and commitment. Member satisfaction was found to be related to commitment (Rogers et al., 1993). Kegler et al. (1998) also found that a members' satisfaction is directly related

to that members' commitment. In the same study, Kegler et al. (1998) found that member satisfaction correlates with decision making. Decision making was found to be related to both member satisfaction and member commitment (Rogers et al., 1993).

Kumpfer, Turner, Hopkins, &Librett, 1993 mentioned that empowering style of leadership increases member satisfaction and perceptions of team efficacy that ultimately increases team effectiveness. Satisfied members then support effective leaders. In turn, member satisfaction was found to be related to directly related to member commitment (Kegler, Steckler, McLeroy, &Malek, 1998).

Participation Benefits

Butterfoss et al. (1996) assessed skills, material, solidarity, and purposive benefits that can be realized as result of participating in an organization. Collaborative or shared decision making and member involvement in group processes fosters participation (Butterfoss, Goodman, &Wandersman, 1996; McMillan, Florin, Stevenson, Kerman, & Mitchell, 1995). Metzger et al. (2005) also showed that open and collaborative decision making has an indirect, positive effect on the level of participation by way of participation benefits and vision consensus.

The professional organization, like the accountancy profession, recognizes the demands upon professionals as the environment changes such as fast moving technology, liberalization of accounting practice and higher demand for improved delivery of services. It needs to respond to the fluidity of the environment in order to continue to fulfill the function of addressing the needs of members. It represents the public interest to legislators and regulators in relation to legislation and regulation. It protects the public interest by ensuring that its members observe the highest standards of professional and ethical conduct. It responds to the needs of its members and maintains the legitimate rights of its members.

Participation benefits can be viewed by the members as the benefits derived from joining the organization which provided them the avenue to take part of the activities required to respond to their respective needs. Further, the intrinsic values of members desire to continue membership because they enjoy being part of the organization and want to continue their membership (Bendapudi and Berry, 1997; Geyskens et al., 1996).

Butterfoss et al. (1996) members' shared decision making and involvement foster participation. The assessed skills, material, solidarity, and purposive benefits that can be recognized as upshot of participating in an organization. Metzger et al. (2005) indicated that indirect, positive effect on the level of participation by way of participation benefits was the result of an open and collaborative decision making.

Social Resources

According to Brian S. Butler, members contribute time, energy, and other resources, enabling a social structure to provide benefits for individuals. These benefits, which include information, influence, and social support, are the basis for a social structure's ability to attract and retain members. This model focuses on the system of opposing forces that link membership size as a component of resource availability and communication activity as an aspect of benefit provision to the sustainability of an online social structure. Availability of resources and provide benefits for current members to remain are fundamental problems underlying the development of sustainable social structures.

The professional organization has the ability to mobilize social resources from its membership to address members' interests and concerns and the mobility of the leaders.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The descriptive method of research was used in this study using the mixed method sequential design. This approach provides the opportunity to examine the interrelationships between 10 key variables using a structured survey questionnaire and followed by one-on-one interviews to better understand the quantitative findings. The survey research using the modified standardized questionnaire developed by Christopher Holliday measured the primary factors in terms of leadership, decision making, communication and sense of community and mediating factors in relation to empowerment member satisfaction, participation benefits, and social resources.

The researcher first collected and analyzed the quantitative (numeric) data followed conducting interviews with key leaders of the PICPA. The qualitative data were analyzed to facilitate the understanding of the quantitative results gathered in phase 1. This sequential method provides statistical explanation of the research problem and in depth analysis of the participants' views obtained in the quantitative results.

Population and Samples

The study samples comprised PICPA members. Under RA 9298, registered CPAs are required to be members of PICPA. The basis for member local chapter affiliation is the place of residency or the place of work. There are 88 local chapters covered in this study and these chapters are clustered by region. There are nine regions and all regions were represented as shown in Table 1. Stratified random sampling was used to determine the sample size. The sample size was computed using Slovin's formula. The actual sample size was four hundred fifty nine (459) out of the sample size of 398. The sample was proportionately distributed using the total membership of 100,556 as of June, 2012. Respondent with no chapter indicated was not considered. All respondents were

members of the Philippine Institute of Certified Public Accountants residing in the Philippines.

The results of the study show that, of the total respondents (n=459), majority were female (60.8%), ranging from 21-71+ years of age, with the largest age group being 21-30 years old (30.9%). Five respondents indicated that were beyond 71 years old. More than two thirds of the respondents reported having a bachelor's degree and 83.2% were residents within where their respective local chapter is serving.

Majority (46%) of the respondents (n=459) reported representing public practice sector indicates that this sector's intention in attending the conferences is to comply with the necessary requirement to the renewal of registration or an acquisition of the certificate of registration.

IV.   FINDINGS

Table 2. Reasons in Attending and Barriers in Attendance

Reasons in Attending	F	%	Barriers in Attendance	F	%
Mandatory Requirement	244	53	No knowledge of the meetings	118	26
Topic/concept	150	32	No time to attend the meetings	107	23
Other Attendees	8	2	Distance	40	9
Guest Speaker	13	3	Transportation	14	3
Leadership	20	4	Time of day the meetings are held	48	10
Others	17	4	Others	18	4
Missing	7	2	Missing	116	25
Total	459	100		459	100

The study reported that members have moderate to high attendance (4-9 meetings) annually and the main reason in attending meetings was to comply with the mandatory requirement set by the government, as shown in Table 2.

It also reported members were not or rarely attending (0-3 meetings) because they do not have knowledge and having no time to attend the meetings.

Table 3. Frequency of Member Representation and Years of Involvement

Member Representation			Years of Involvement		
Sector	F	%	No. of Years	F	%
Public Practice	211	46	1 – 10	196	43
Education	60	13.1	1 – 20	75	16
Commerce & Industry	121	26.4	21 – 30	82	18
Government	55	12	31 – 40	29	6
Missing	12	2.6	41 and up	24	5
			Missing	53	12
Total	459	100		459	100

Table 3 shows that majority of the members represent the public practice sector and with least from the government. PRC-BOA requires all CPAs involved in public practice and in education sector to comply with mandated 60-units mandatory continuing professional development. The higher percentage of the public sector indicates that this sector's intention in attending the conferences is to comply with the necessary requirement to the renewal of registration or an acquisition of the certificate of registration and as educational undertakings. It was noted that 43% of the respondents served the organizations for at least 10 years and 5% more than 41 years. The average involvement of the respondents was 15.42 years which they were active in PICPA.

Commitment

The study found out that majority of the members was strongly committed to the organization and are proud to tell others that they are part of the organization and they care about the future of it, a compelling factor in organization sustainability. When a member accepts influence to set up a satisfying relationship, identification occurs. The person may feel proud to be part of a group respecting its values and accomplishments.

The study further revealed that commitment can be increased by effective leadership, as well as the sense of community and communication.

Leadership

The study revealed that members agree that they have effective leader. The leader has the attributes of making an effort to get to know his/her members; have skills to guide them toward goals; effective in managing meetings; in articulating vision; respect in the community, and nurturing their commitment. Further revealed, that leadership has moderate influence on participation and on commitment.

The findings also revealed that member satisfaction and participation benefits lead to increase member participation. Effective leadership can moderately

increase the frequency of members' attendance in meetings and/or activities, the number of responsibilities assumed and degree of their involvement in discussing matters pertaining with the organization. The leader that mobilizes organization's resources and effectively manages the social resources of the organization in implementing project has an effect on member participation in a professional organization.

Leader can do is to create an environment where motivation and commitment thrives. The commitment comes from within, and is a driving passion that exists inside a person. Leadership can foster satisfaction of the members that lead to have the support of the satisfied members to the effective leaders. The member's satisfaction depends of the number, kind, and value of rewards that the social interaction provides. Members feel obligated to conform to the mandates and avoid sanctions are more likely to continue their membership and to participate in their organization activities.

The leader must have deep understanding of what an organization needs to accomplish and is committed to deliver results, thus satisfaction can be felt. Leader must focus on the performance of committee members and inspire them to commit to accomplish tasks successfully. Leader must go beyond his/her personal interests and must touch on areas of organizational consciousness of the members that PICPA is their professional organization.

Communication

The study indicates that communication has weak relationship on participation and on commitment. Respondents considered communication sent thru mails, emails or fax for the written materials, verbal reports and group discussions during meetings "very important" and talking to outside of the organizational meeting "somewhat important. This study confirms to Butterfoss et al. (1996) that communication is a factor to entice people to be involved in the organization's activities.

The study found out that social resources variable has moderate relationship on communication. Empowerment, membership satisfaction and participation benefits have weak relationship on communication.

Reaching out to members through communication is a challenging task for leaders. Information, directives and other updates coming from the National Office down to members that passes through GAO and Regional Council to local chapters to members is quite a lengthy communication channel. Lengthy communication channel hinders member's participation as indicated by 25.7% of the members had no knowledge of the meetings.

Having a good communication with members make them feel that they belong to the organization. The study also revealed and confirmed Minkler's study that having a good communication makes members feel that they belong to the organization, allows them to resolve conflicts, develop trusts among them and helps direct toward a common goal. Effectively shared information

with members satisfy them, thus, communication can increase or decrease in the participation and commitment of the members using social resources available.

The findings also agree to Beach (1996) that empowerment remains with the individual and cannot be imposed by others. Organizations wishing to instill a culture of empowerment must find a way of establishing systems and processes that do not restrict members. Successful organizations that practice empowerment delegate and expect people to initiate, create and to feel ownership. An empowering leader needs to facilitate accomplishments to the extent possible.

The resources' availability and to provide benefits for current members remain a fundamental problem underlying the development of sustainable online social structures. With social resources available, communication can increase or decrease in the participation and commitment of the members using social resources available. Open-communication line makes members feel that they belong to the organization. Effective sharing of information with others - including oral, written, and even non-verbal communication satisfies member.

According to PICPA leaders, "with the deep understanding of what an organization needs to accomplish, leader is committed to deliver results, thus satisfaction is felt. Leader must focus on the performance of committee members, but also want each person to fulfill his or her potential. If members are inspired, they are committed to accomplish tasks successfully. As a leader, I must go beyond personal interests. Must touch on areas of organizational consciousness that PICPA is our professional organization"

Decision Making

Decision making has weak relationship on participation but no relationship on commitment. Respondents "avoid open arguments and disagreements", and agree that they were encouraged to speak their minds even if it means disagreeing with the majority and decision making is collaboratively done. Decision making has no significant relationship with empowerment, thus the finding agrees to Beach (1996) that empowerment remains with the individual and cannot be imposed by others. Organizations wishing to instill a culture of empowerment must find a way of establishing systems and processes that do not restrict members. Decision making has moderate correlation with membership satisfaction, participation benefits, and social resources.

The weak relationship of decision making on participation indicates that members do attend activities for the compliance of the mandated CPE units. The current 60 units mandatory continuing professional development requirement set by PRC-BOA can be viewed as an involvement in events, activities, or programs whose primary purpose is educational in nature" (Douglah, 1970, p. 901). On the other hand, the study confirmed Wessel

that deterrents for the non-participation of members are cost, work constraints, conflicts may be between course offerings and work responsibilities, difficulty of taking time off from work in order to participate. Some problems caused by child care issues, other family commitments, individual's perception about the lack of benefit from engaging in further learning activities and member's disengagement or apathy toward further education.

These findings were supported by leaders of the organization. They said, "PICPA is our professional organization and no other organization that will serve us. Leader has the ability to think critically, and solve problems at work and pull together resources. Proper consultation on making decisions gives importance to the members. It is as good as saying to the members that their presence and participation is badly needed in the organization's existence".

Sense of Community

Sense of community was assessed by examining the feelings of connection, support, and collective problem solving. This study found out that sense of community has weak relationship on participation and on commitment. The results somehow affirm that sense of community, or the feelings of connection, support, and collective problem solving relates to member participation and found that there is a relationship. McMillan et al. (1995) found commitment to represent a sense of pride in the group. Wolff (2001a) notes that organizations build community by creating a forum where diverse members of the community can gather to exchange information and solve local problems. Heller (1989) finds the significance of relationship structures as key components in determining collective action. He adds that members frequently report that they receive personal and professional support in the social network of the organization (Wolff, 2001a).

The findings of the study revealed that sense of community has moderate relationship on social resources on membership satisfaction, and on participation benefits. However, sense of community has no significant relationship on empowerment, thus, the finding to Beach (1996) that participation does not always lead to empowerment. Empowerment remains with the individual and cannot be imposed by others. Maton and Salem (1995) indicate particularly on the important aspects of a sense of community are fostering a group-based belief system that is strengths based and encourages thinking beyond the self, and having a support system that is encompassing and peer based.

Participation may also reflect social support, since through active involvement in activities both new opportunities for interpersonal interaction and creation of new relationships, thus increasing the opportunities for support exchange. Participation in activities and organizations may also provide ties that constitute social resources available to the person that offer opportunities to realize interests, gather relevant information, and satisfy

needs. Key leaders stated that "members be able to build rapport with other members or leaders, and get them to work together towards a common goal. Think not what you can benefits from participating to the organization but what you can share."

Conclusions

According to International Federation of Accountants, a strong and well-governed professional accountancy organization (PAO) produces and sustains a strong accountancy profession that is able to serve the public interest and contribute to economic stability and growth. A successful PAO gains much of its strength from the sense of identity, benefits, and rights that members derive from membership; and from the contributions that individual members and firms make to the PAO in recognition of its public interest perspective. This sense of identity can also encourage compliance with professional and ethics standards as well as other membership requirements set by the PAO.

From the foregoing findings, this study concludes that effective leadership is the key to members' commitment and commitment is a compelling factor in the organization's sustainability and a component of members' engagement. Equipped with leadership skills, leaders make an effort to know the members, influence them to accomplish common goals, managing meetings and in articulating vision of the organization thus, this lead to member satisfaction. The leader assumes the role of a team leader. On the other hand, members are encouraged to attend meetings and think not what they can benefit from participating to the organization but what they can share. Being committed is a personal responsibility. One must earn the trust and respect of members in order to move forward to attain the set goals. Effective leaders inspire members to participate, and once they are satisfied, they will become committed members.

Moreover, effective leadership, sense of community and communication were found to be a common influence for member commitment and member participation. Effective leaders foster an inclusive organizational climate that attracts committed members and enhances organization success in acquiring funding and mobilizing resources (Hays, Hays, DeVille, & Mulhall, 2000; Kumpfer, 2005; Wolff, 2001b).

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Based on the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are made:

1. PICPA to consider capability building for its leadership, including to recognize and mobilize internal and external resources, training facilitation and communication skills, training to empower the membership on how to fund source for the operation of the local chapter. Based on this research, leadership, communication, and social resources are critical aspects of effective delivery of service to members and keys in sustaining the chapter. Leaders should also focus on developing skills that are based on the principles of collaborative leadership as one method for improving the long-term outlook of the organization, as well as cultivating new leadership with fresh perspectives.

2. Reaching out to members through communication is a challenging task for leaders. Communication has an influence on member participation and commitment. Communication is a key factor in getting people involved in an organization and in fostering their participation. PICPA has to assess the fluidity of communication. Information, directives and other updates coming from the National Office down to members that passes through GAO and Regional Council to local chapters to members. In fact, Minkler (1999) stated that smooth internal communication among the membership maybe the most essential ingredient for enhancing the climate of an organization. Open communication helps the group focus on a common purpose, increases trust and sharing of resources, provides information, and allows members to express and resolve misgivings.

3. This study found that sense of community has moderate effect on membership satisfaction. The result in congruence to Morrison, Tay, and Deiner (2011) that those with higher levels of esteem for the organization reported being more satisfied with their lives. On national satisfaction study found that leading satisfaction with one's nation to meaningfully impact is thought to be crucial for experiencing happiness and wellbeing. Lamm, et. Al. found that the single act of taking on a leadership position alters individuals'

perceptions of leadership, directly driving their desires to be involved or not. Creating a sense of belonging and inclusiveness with the general membership can greatly improve the quality of the leadership experiences these individuals have, reinforcing their desire to affiliate and identify with being part of an association at the national level. Along this line, PICPA has to consider social cohesion activities in its membership development program. Satisfied members felt that they belong to the organization, thus, this increase member participation.

4. Satisfied members retain their membership in the organization. PICPA has to devise membership retention program to reduce paper membership and to retain APO status. The satisfactions of members mobilized by effective leaders are important in increasing and maintaining member participation and commitment. Along with sense of community and communication factors, membership retention program has to be formulated, implemented and monitored. Leaders should make a continuous effort to involve members in various activities. Specialized mailing lists can be done for faster information sharing. Recognition and rewards for those achiever members in the local level. Regular activities sponsored by different sectors on monthly or quarterly basis, aside from the CPD seminars.

5. PICPA as a whole, as well as every individual in it, is responsible for achieving its objectives; everyone has a role in steering the organization toward those objectives. PICPA is our organization and no other organization that can protect our interest and welfare. Leaders should actively promote the integration of governance by demonstrating the benefits to all stakeholders, and by developing, communicating and maintaining a clear map of roles and responsibilities within the organization. On the individual level, member has the responsibility to participate and be committed. Think not what PICPA can do for you as member but what you can do for PICPA and for the accountancy profession.

6. PICPA National Office has to institutionalize local chapter operation by having an institutional guide for organizing and managing local chapters. This covers membership recruitment and membership retention, resource management and membership administration. This will provide the staff and active board members a practical compendium that they can use for all operations. Fostering good governance is more than a compliance exercise; governance should permeate all facets of the organization. The governance principles should be taken into account both in setting the PICPA's objectives (planning), and in all subsequent actions (implementation and review).

7. This study used multi-method strategies to understand members' engagement through participation and

commitment in individual level and organization-level context.

8. The goal of study is to tease out factors to foster membership engagement that are most appropriate for the population and the context in which this organization and similar efforts might operate.

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