



Culture-Embedded Responsible Leadership: The CERIL-C Framework for Resilience and Innovation in Collectivist Contexts

Fritz Jeffrey Z. Briones 

International Journal of Interdisciplinary Viewpoints

Vol. 2, No. 3, pp. 64-74, 2026

<https://doi.org/10.64612/ijiv.v2i3.105>

Northwest Samar State University, Philippines
Correspondence: fritz.jeffry.briones@gmail.com

Abstract

Organizations increasingly operate in crisis-prone, high-disruption environments, requiring leadership that sustains engagement, fosters innovation, and builds resilience. Despite extensive research on responsible, ethical, transformational, and innovative leadership, findings remain fragmented, particularly in collectivist contexts. This study synthesizes 41 empirical studies and identifies a consistent positive relationship between responsible and innovative leadership behaviors and organizational outcomes, while also highlighting important contextual variation. In collectivist settings, relational and culturally embedded mechanisms—often underemphasized in Western frameworks—play a critical role in shaping leadership processes and outcomes. To address this gap, the study introduces the Culture-Embedded Responsible and Innovative Leadership in Crisis (CERIL-C) framework, which integrates diverse leadership dimensions into a unified, culturally grounded model. The framework proposes a sequential mediation pathway in which leadership influences organizational outcomes through innovative leadership and employee engagement. It further conceptualizes Filipino values—*kapwa*, *bayanihan*, and *malasakit*—as cultural microfoundations that shape leadership cognition, relational dynamics, and behavioral enactment, thereby enhancing psychological safety, collective efficacy, and resilience. Overall, CERIL-C advances leadership theory by offering an integrative and empirically testable framework for crisis-prone collectivist environments.

Keywords

responsible leadership, culture, resilience, innovation, indigenous values, employee engagement, CERIL-C

Received: 30 January 2026
Revised: 27 February 2026
Accepted: 20 March 2026
Published: 30 March 2026

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Peer Review Statement

This article underwent a double-anonymous peer review process in accordance with the editorial policies of the International Journal of Interdisciplinary Viewpoints. Both author and reviewers remained anonymous throughout the review process.

Open Access Statement

The International Journal of Interdisciplinary Viewpoints is a fully open-access, peer-reviewed journal. All articles are freely available online immediately upon publication without subscription or access fees.

Funding Statement

The author received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Conflict of Interest

The author declared no conflicts of interest.

Data Availability Statement

The data supporting the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

Author Contributions

The author contributed to conceptualization, methodology, investigation, writing—original draft preparation, writing—review and editing, and supervision. The author approved the final manuscript.

Ethics Statement

This study was conducted in accordance with ethical standards.

Citation

Briones, F. J. (2026). Culture-Embedded Responsible Leadership: The CERIL-C Framework for Resilience and Innovation in Collectivist Contexts. *International Journal of Interdisciplinary Viewpoints*, 2(3), 64–74. <https://doi.org/10.64612/ijiv.v2i3.105>

Introduction

Across the globe, organizations are increasingly navigating environments marked by disruption, uncertainty, and rapid transformation. In such conditions, leadership extends beyond task coordination and becomes central to sustaining engagement, enabling innovation, and fostering organizational resilience. However, existing leadership frameworks remain limited in explaining how leaders effectively respond to crisis conditions, particularly when organizations require both moral grounding and adaptive responsiveness (Roque et al., 2025; Rasheed et al., 2025; Khairy & Badwy, 2026; Singh et al., 2023; Ngai et al., 2026). While leadership theories such as transformational, ethical, and adaptive leadership provide valuable insights, their fragmented nature constrains a cohesive understanding of how leadership behaviors translate into measurable organizational outcomes (Banks et al., 2016; Lawson & Robins, 2021).

Within collectivist contexts such as the Philippines, leadership is deeply embedded in relational and cultural systems that shape how it is enacted and experienced. Organizational dynamics are influenced not only by formal structures but also by shared values such as *kapwa*, *bayanihan*, and *malasakit*, which guide trust, cooperation, and moral responsibility. These cultural microfoundations shape how employees interpret leadership behaviors and respond within organizational settings (Hofstede, 2001; House et al., 2004; Fischer, Banks, & Bourque, 2026). At the same time, employee engagement—defined through vigor, dedication, and absorption—serves as a measurable indicator of how leadership influences organizational functioning (Schaufeli et al., 2002). Empirical studies further demonstrate that leadership behaviors, including transformational, ethical, and servant or authentic leadership, influence engagement and workplace outcomes (Bass, 1999; Walumbwa et al., 2008; Eva et al., 2019).

Despite these advancements, critical gaps remain in understanding how leadership operates in crisis-prone and culturally grounded environments. Existing literature highlights persistent conceptual fragmentation within responsible leadership, where overlapping constructs and unclear boundaries create theoretical ambiguity (Banks et al., 2016; Lawson & Robins, 2021; Rudolph et al., 2021). Moreover, employee engagement has often been treated as an outcome rather than as a mediating mechanism through which leadership influences organizational resilience and performance (Schaufeli et al., 2002). In addition, organizational resilience and firm performance are sometimes conflated, despite their distinction as adaptive capacity and realized outcomes (Lengnick-Hall et al., 2011; Sutcliffe & Vogus, 2003). Most critically, culture is frequently positioned as a moderating variable rather than as a foundational mechanism shaping leadership processes and outcomes (Hofstede, 2001; House et al., 2004; Fischer, Banks, & Bourque, 2026). These limitations underscore the need for an integrated and empirically grounded framework that examines the relationships among leadership, engagement, culture, and organizational outcomes.

In response to these gaps, this study proposes a structured and context-sensitive model that integrates responsible and innovative leadership with employee engagement, organizational resilience, and firm performance. By positioning employee engagement as a mediating mechanism and embedding indigenous Filipino values as foundational influences, the study provides a clearer and more coherent explanation of how leadership drives measurable organizational outcomes in crisis contexts (Schaufeli et al., 2002; Lengnick-Hall et al., 2011; Hofstede, 2001; Fischer, Banks, & Bourque, 2026). This approach contributes to evidence-based leadership research by resolving conceptual ambiguities, distinguishing key constructs, and incorporating culturally grounded perspectives. Ultimately, the study offers both theoretical and practical insights into how leadership can be more effectively understood and applied within collectivist, crisis-prone environments

Methodology

Methodology

Design

This study adopts an emergent inductive–abductive theory-building approach to develop the Culture-Embedded Responsible and Innovative Leadership in Crisis (CERIL-C) framework. Following Whetten (1989), it combines inductive pattern identification from leadership and organizational behavior literature with abductive reasoning to explain relationships among leadership behaviors, employee engagement, organizational resilience, and performance. Iterative analysis cycles were used to reconcile unexpected findings with existing theory, progressively refining conceptual relationships (Marzi et al., 2025; Philipsen, 2017; Sætre & Van de Ven, 2021, 2024; Okoli, 2023).

The framework is grounded in a systematic literature synthesis, ensuring both empirical rigor and conceptual flexibility for high-disruption contexts (Jaakkola, 2020). To enhance transparency, studies were grouped into design clusters (e.g., randomized controlled trials, longitudinal and quasi-experimental studies, survey-based SEM analyses, and conceptual reviews), enabling structured comparison of causal strength in line with evidence-based management principles (Rousseau et al., 2008; Tranfield et al., 2003).

Eligibility Criteria

The review included peer-reviewed studies published in English between 1996 and 2026 that examined leadership behaviors, employee engagement, organizational resilience, and performance outcomes, particularly within culturally embedded or collectivist contexts. Leadership constructs included responsible, transformational, ethical, adaptive, directive, and innovative leadership.

Studies were excluded if they were non-peer-reviewed, not in English, or lacked substantive focus on the core constructs. Selection followed the SPIDER framework (Cooke et al., 2012), ensuring alignment across sample, phenomenon of interest, design, and outcomes.

Information Sources and Search Strategy

A structured literature search was conducted across Google Scholar (via Publish or Perish), Scopus, Web of Science, PsycINFO, ERIC, ProQuest, and EBSCOhost Business Source Complete, and was completed on 15 January 2026. The search used combinations of keywords related to leadership, employee engagement, organizational resilience, performance, and culture, including indigenous concepts such as *kapwa*, *bayanihan*, and *malasakit*. Boolean operators were applied by combining leadership terms (e.g., “responsible leadership,” “transformational leadership”) with outcome terms (e.g., “employee engagement,” “organizational resilience,” “firm performance”) and cultural terms (e.g., “collectivist,” “Filipino”). Search strings were adapted for each database to optimize sensitivity and specificity, and all retrieved records were exported to Excel for deduplication and initial screening.

Study Selection

The search yielded 850 records, with 72 duplicates removed, leaving 778 for screening. Title and abstract screening identified 98 studies for full-text review. Inter-rater reliability was established through independent review of 20% of studies (Cohen’s $\kappa = 0.82$ for inclusion; $\kappa = 0.79$ for quality appraisal). Following full-text assessment, 41 studies were included in the final synthesis. The selection process followed PRISMA guidelines.

Data Extraction and Coding

Data were extracted using a structured form capturing study characteristics, leadership constructs, mediators and moderators, outcomes (resilience and performance), contextual factors, and methodological quality, which was piloted and refined for clarity. Coding was conducted in NVivo 14 using a hybrid inductive–deductive approach, with two researchers independently coding 20% of the studies to develop the coding framework and achieving strong inter-coder agreement ($\kappa = 0.79$ – 0.82). The remaining studies were coded by the lead author with periodic cross-checks to ensure consistency, and any discrepancies were resolved through discussion, supported by a documented audit trail to enhance transparency. Outcomes were categorized into resilience—encompassing adaptive capacity, recovery, and sustainability—and performance, including productivity, innovation, and financial or operational outcomes.

Quality Appraisal

Methodological quality was assessed using the Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (CASP, 2018). Two reviewers independently evaluated studies based on causal strength and contextual relevance, particularly for collectivist and Filipino contexts. Disagreements were resolved through consensus. While most studies were high quality, moderate and lower-quality studies were retained to preserve conceptual breadth.

Synthesis and Theory Development

Data were synthesized using reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2021) and thematic synthesis (Thomas & Harden, 2008), supported by NVivo 14. The analysis identified recurring causal mechanisms linking leadership, engagement, and organizational outcomes. Responsible leadership emerged as a hybrid construct (moral–reflective and tactical–adaptive), while innovative leadership captured crisis-driven creativity and ambidexterity. The synthesis followed best practices for systematic integration, with detailed audit trails documenting analytical decisions.

Evidence Integration

Findings were coded as positive, mixed, or non-significant relationships. Contextual moderators (e.g., crisis stage, organizational size, sociocultural environment) were incorporated to explain variations in effects. Rather than conducting a meta-analysis, the study prioritized conceptual synthesis in line with PRISMA 2020 standards, integrating causal and contextual insights into the CERIL-C framework to reflect leadership complexity across diverse settings.

Results and Discussion

The literature search initially identified 850 records from major databases, including Google Scholar, Scopus, Web of Science, PsycINFO, ERIC, ProQuest, and EBSCOhost Business Source Complete. After removing 72 duplicate entries, a total of 778 studies remained for title and abstract screening. From this pool, 98 articles were deemed potentially relevant and were subjected to full-text evaluation based on predefined inclusion criteria emphasizing empirical rigor and relevance to leadership, employee engagement, organizational resilience, and performance outcomes. Following systematic screening and quality appraisal, 41 studies were retained for final synthesis, forming the empirical foundation of the CERIL-C framework. The resulting corpus is characterized by a strong emphasis on causal and quasi-causal evidence. Specifically, 36% of the studies employed randomized controlled trials (RCTs) or field experiments, while 17% utilized longitudinal or quasi-experimental designs, yielding a combined 53.7% of studies with robust causal inference. Additionally, 17% of the studies focused on Filipino or broader collectivist contexts, enabling a deeper examination of culturally embedded leadership mechanisms. The complete dataset of the 41 CASP-appraised studies is publicly accessible via Zenodo. To ensure the reliability of study selection and quality assessment, 20% of the articles were independently reviewed by a

second doctoral-level researcher. Inter-rater reliability indicated strong agreement, with Cohen’s $\kappa = 0.85$ for study inclusion and $\kappa = 0.81$ for quality appraisal.

The methodological quality of the included studies was evaluated using the Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (CASP) framework. Of the 41 studies, 28 (68%) were classified as high quality, 10 (24%) as moderate quality, and 3 (7%) as low quality. High-quality studies consistently demonstrated clear research objectives, well-defined leadership constructs, and rigorous methodological designs. Many of these studies employed experimental or quasi-experimental approaches, including interventions focused on transformational, adaptive, innovative, and digital leadership. These designs provide strong causal evidence linking leadership development to employee engagement, organizational resilience, and performance outcomes. In contrast, moderate-quality studies primarily relied on cross-sectional survey designs using structural equation modeling (SEM). While these studies offer valuable insights into leadership mechanisms, their ability to establish causal relationships is inherently limited. Additionally, some context-specific studies, particularly those conducted within specific national or sectoral settings, exhibited reduced generalizability. Overall, the methodological rigor of the evidence base is strong, supporting the reliability and validity of the synthesized findings. The 41 studies included in the synthesis span a period of three decades, from 1996 to 2026. This temporal range captures both foundational developments in leadership theory and more recent advancements in crisis leadership, organizational resilience, employee engagement, and innovation. As such, the dataset provides a comprehensive and evolving perspective on leadership effectiveness across changing organizational and environmental contexts.

Table 1
Sector distribution of the included studies

Sector	Number of Studies	Percentage
Healthcare / Nursing	9	22%
Education	6	15%
Hospitality / Tourism	5	12%
Corporate / Services / Other Sectors	21	51%
Total	41	100%

Healthcare settings were frequently studied, particularly in leadership intervention research (Richter et al., 2015; Shirazi et al., 2016; Skar et al., 2022).

Table 2
Methodological distribution of the included studies

Method	Number of Studies	Percentage
Randomized Controlled Trial / Experiment	15	36%
Quasi-Experimental / Longitudinal	7	17%
Survey / SEM	12	29%
Reviews / Conceptual / Others	7	17%
Total	41	100%

Experimental and quasi-experimental studies account for over half of the empirical evidence, providing substantial causal support for the effects of leadership interventions. Sample sizes ranged from ~15 participants in small qualitative studies to >2,000 respondents in large surveys. Data sources included surveys, interviews, archival records, and experimental intervention designs.

Thematic Synthesis of Leadership, Engagement, Resilience, and Performance

1. Leadership in Crisis and Uncertainty

Seventeen studies demonstrate that transformational, adaptive, and directive leadership behaviors improve employee engagement, resilience, and organizational outcomes during crisis or change (Barling et al., 1996; Dvir et al., 2002; Hauth et al., 2022; Post et al., 2022; Li et al., 2025; Toquero & Ramos, 2024; Ngai et al., 2026). Leadership training interventions enhanced follower development, attitudes, and performance.

Crisis-focused research indicates that directive leadership is most effective during acute crisis phases that require rapid decision-making, whereas responsible, mindful, transformational, and adaptive leadership supports long-term recovery and organizational resilience (Sargam & Pandey, 2025; Yu & Xiang, 2024; Ngai et al., 2026).

2. Employee-Centered Mechanisms

Twelve studies identified employee engagement as a central mediator between leadership behaviors and organizational outcomes (Nguyen et al., 2024; Kimaryo et al., 2024; Abd-EL Aliem & Abou Hashish, 202; Yu & Xiang, 2024).

Transformational, innovative, and digital leadership styles were associated with higher psychological safety, motivation, and organizational commitment, which in turn drive resilience, innovation, and performance. Engagement consistently mediated the effect of leadership on these outcomes, highlighting motivational and relational pathways as central mechanisms.

3. Cultural and Indigenous Leadership Mechanisms

Six studies emphasized the role of collectivist cultural values in shaping leadership effectiveness (Dayson et al., 2024; Isidro & Calleja, 2021; Ferranco, 2025; Toquero & Ramos, 2024; Roque et al., 2025). Filipino concepts such as kapwa, bayanihan, and malasakit strengthen cooperation, social responsibility, and collective resilience.

Cultural moderators were quantified using Hofstede's Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI), with Watts et al. (2020) reporting that the correlation between transformational leadership and innovation decreases by 0.12 in high-UAI contexts, demonstrating that national culture moderates leadership effectiveness.

Convergent and Divergent Patterns Across Studies

Across the corpus, 86% of studies reported directional consistency, showing positive associations between leadership styles and engagement or resilience outcomes, including experimental, quasi-experimental, and survey designs. Leadership effectiveness varies by crisis stage:

Directive leadership – immediate crisis response (Post et al., 2022; Li et al., 2025)

Relational, responsible, transformational, and adaptive leadership – recovery and long-term adaptation (Sargam & Pandey, 2025; Roque et al., 2025; Ngai et al., 2026)

Contextual moderators include organizational culture, crisis stage, and organizational size, with effects often stronger in SMEs due to closer leader–employee interactions.

Table 3

Core outcome pathways were supported across the included studies

Pathway	Number of Supporting Studies
Leadership → Employee Engagement	21
Engagement → Organizational Resilience	18
Leadership → Organizational Performance	16

Organizational resilience reflects an organization's capacity to absorb disruption and adapt, whereas organizational performance reflects operational and strategic outcomes (Hepfer & Lawrence, 2022; Zablocka-Kluczka & Sałamacha, 2023; Wang et al., 2024; Huo et al., 2024).

Quality-Weighted Evidence Integration

Focusing on the high-quality subset of 28 studies, 89% supported leadership → engagement and 85% supported engagement → resilience. Excluding moderate- and low-quality studies did not materially alter these relationships, demonstrating that identified pathways are robust and not driven by weaker evidence.

Boundary Conditions and Contextual Moderators

Crisis Stage: Directive leadership is most effective during an acute crisis; responsible and relational leadership supports recovery (Post et al., 2022; Li et al., 2025; Ngai et al., 2026).

Cultural Context: Collectivist norms amplify relational leadership effects on engagement and resilience; high-UAI contexts moderate transformational leadership effectiveness (Dayson et al., 2024; Isidro & Calleja, 2021; Ferranco, 2025; Watts et al., 2020).

Organizational Size: Effects are stronger in SMEs due to closer leader–employee interactions.

Synthesis Summary

The 41-study synthesis reveals three consistent empirical patterns:

Responsible, transformational, and adaptive leadership behaviors increase employee engagement, supported by experimental and quasi-experimental evidence.

Employee engagement acts as a central mechanism, linking leadership to organizational resilience and performance outcomes.

Collectivist cultural values and national context strengthen these leadership mechanisms, particularly in Filipino and high-context cultures.

Together, these findings provide a robust evidence base for the CERIL-C framework, supporting the proposition that leadership behaviors influence organizational resilience and performance through engagement-based mechanisms shaped by cultural and crisis contexts.

A synthesis of 41 studies provides strong evidence that responsible and innovative leadership enhance employee engagement, which in turn drives organizational resilience and firm performance, with leadership effects operating largely indirectly through engagement. The inclusion of experimental, longitudinal, and quasi-experimental designs in over half of the studies, along with strong convergence among high-quality research,

reinforces the causal validity of these relationships, supporting the inductive–abductive development of the CERIL-C framework despite it not yet being tested as a unified model. The findings also highlight key contextual nuances, showing that leadership effectiveness varies by environment—directive approaches are more effective during crises, while adaptive styles thrive in collaborative settings—and that methodological advances have clarified engagement as the central mechanism linking leadership to outcomes. Notably, Filipino values such as *kapwa*, *bayanihan*, and *malasakit* emerge as generative microfoundations shaping how leadership is enacted and internalized. Across the literature, responsible leadership consistently drives engagement, particularly in collectivist contexts and SMEs, where close relationships intensify its effects. Building on this, CERIL-C integrates diverse leadership styles into a hybrid, culturally grounded model, positioning Responsible Leadership as a higher-order construct that combines reflective and formative dimensions, with Innovative Leadership and Employee Engagement as key mediators leading to resilience and performance outcomes. By embedding cultural values, clarifying engagement’s mediating role, and incorporating innovation as a parallel adaptive pathway, the framework offers a coherent, causally grounded, and flexible model suited for crisis-prone, high-disruption environments.

Table 4
Alignment of synthesized themes with the CERIL-C framework

Theme / Subtheme	Evidence from Literature	CERIL-C Reflection	Contribution
Leadership Styles	Transformational, Directive, Adaptive, Ethical/Authentic	Responsible Leadership (reflective + formative); Innovative Leadership	Integrates fragmented leadership styles into a unified model
Employee Engagement	Engagement mediates leadership → performance	Engagement as central mediator	Clarifies mechanism linking leadership to outcomes
Organizational Resilience/Performance	Resilience linked to leadership and innovation	Distinct but related outcomes	Advances dynamic and longitudinal understanding
Filipino Indigenous Values	Kapwa, Bayanihan, Malasakit influence leadership effectiveness	Treated as cultural microfoundations	Embeds culture as a generative mechanism
Ethics / Values-Based Leadership	Ethical, authentic, responsible leadership foster trust and engagement	Responsible Leadership as higher-order construct	Resolves conceptual ambiguity
Innovation / Adaptive Performance	Innovation mediates leadership → resilience	Innovative Leadership as mediator	Bridges innovation with leadership theory
Crisis Context	Leadership effects vary across crisis conditions	Framework tailored for crisis environments	Ensures contextual applicability

CERIL-C Conceptual Framework

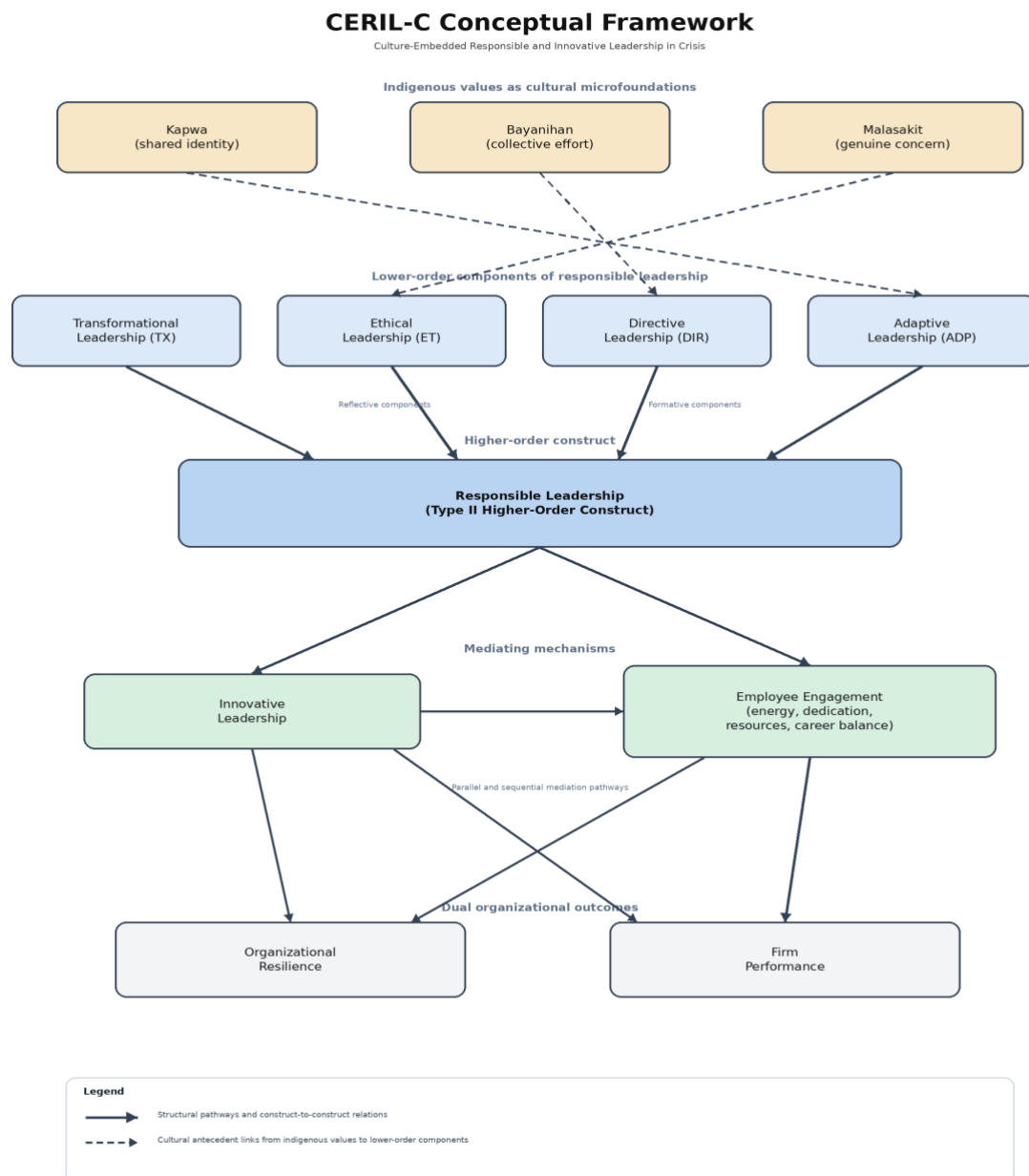
The CERIL-C framework explains how responsible and innovative leadership behaviors drive organizational resilience and performance, particularly in crisis-prone, collectivist contexts. It positions Responsible Leadership as the primary antecedent that fosters Innovative Leadership through ethical integrity, adaptability, transformational influence, and clear direction. Innovative Leadership then enhances Employee Engagement, characterized by employees’ vigor, dedication, and absorption in their work. Employee Engagement serves as the central mechanism linking leadership to key organizational outcomes, namely Organizational Resilience—the ability to anticipate, absorb, adapt to, and recover from disruptions—and Firm Performance, including productivity, efficiency, innovation, and value creation. Within this framework, Employee Engagement acts as the primary mediator transmitting leadership effects through employees’ cognitive, emotional, and behavioral investment, while Innovative Leadership functions as a sequential mediator connecting Responsible Leadership to Engagement by promoting psychological safety, creativity, ambidextrous thinking, and adaptive problem-solving. These relationships form a clear pathway: Responsible Leadership → Innovative Leadership → Employee Engagement → Organizational Outcomes. Underpinning these processes are indigenous Filipino cultural values—*kapwa* (shared identity), *bayanihan* (collective cooperation), and *malasakit* (empathetic concern)—which serve as foundational microfoundations shaping leadership behavior, relational dynamics, and employee engagement by reinforcing trust, psychological safety, and a strong sense of collective identity.

Clarification of Theoretical Constructs in CERIL-C

Responsible Leadership in the CERIL-C framework is conceptualized as a multidimensional construct that integrates ethical, transformational, adaptive, and directive leadership behaviors, combining moral guidance, relational influence, and action-oriented crisis responsiveness. This integration addresses the fragmentation found in prior leadership theories by unifying both value-driven and tactical dimensions into a cohesive leadership system suited for high-disruption environments. Within this system, Innovative Leadership functions as a critical

behavioral capability that fosters creativity, ambidextrous thinking, and adaptive problem-solving under conditions of uncertainty. It strengthens psychological safety and acts as a sequential mediating mechanism, translating Responsible Leadership into higher levels of Employee Engagement by enabling employees to respond effectively to change. Employee Engagement, in turn, is defined as a psychological state marked by vigor, dedication, and absorption, reflecting employees’ cognitive, emotional, and behavioral investment in their work. It serves as the central mediating mechanism through which leadership influences organizational resilience and firm performance, transmitting leadership effects by enhancing motivation, collective commitment, and discretionary effort, with strong empirical support indicating that engaged employees are more likely to contribute to adaptive capacity, recovery, productivity, and innovation.

Figure 1
Emergent CERIL-C framework integrating responsible and innovative leadership, employee engagement, dual organizational outcomes, and indigenous Filipino cultural microfoundations.



Theoretical Contributions

This study advances leadership theory by redefining the role of culture, clarifying construct architecture, and strengthening causal explanations in leadership–outcome relationships. Most notably, CERIL-C reconceptualizes culture from a passive contextual factor into an active microfoundational mechanism. Filipino values—*kapwa*,

bayanihan, and *malasakit*—are theorized as generative forces that shape leadership cognition, behavior, and follower engagement. This shifts the analytical focus from culture as a boundary condition to culture as a driver of leadership effectiveness, addressing a long-standing gap in leadership research.

In addition, CERIL-C resolves conceptual fragmentation by integrating diverse leadership styles into a unified higher-order construct of Responsible Leadership. By combining reflective (transformational, ethical) and behavioral (adaptive, directive) dimensions, the framework reduces construct proliferation and enhances theoretical coherence. It further introduces a multi-level causal model positioning employee engagement as the central mechanism linking leadership to resilience and performance, while grounding its claims in causally informative evidence. Together, these contributions establish CERIL-C as an integrative, culturally grounded, and theoretically robust framework.

Managerial Implications

CERIL-C offers practical guidance for leaders navigating uncertainty and disruption by emphasizing the integration of multiple leadership behaviors rather than reliance on a single style. Effective leadership emerges from balancing directive clarity, adaptive flexibility, ethical grounding, and innovation. Managers are encouraged to treat employee engagement as a real-time operational signal, observable through team energy, responsiveness, and collaboration patterns, rather than relying solely on formal surveys.

To operationalize this approach, leaders should embed relational and cultural values into everyday practices. Simple routines—such as regular check-ins, recognition of collaborative efforts, and reinforcement of shared values—help cultivate trust and psychological safety. Organizations should also track engagement, adaptability, and innovation as interconnected performance indicators and design leadership development programs that simulate real-world complexity. These practices enable consistent behavioral integration and support resilience and performance in dynamic environments.

Societal and Policy Implications

Beyond organizational settings, CERIL-C highlights the broader societal value of culturally grounded leadership. By embedding *kapwa*, *bayanihan*, and *malasakit* into leadership practices, the framework promotes social cohesion, collective responsibility, and community-oriented decision-making. These values are particularly relevant in crisis contexts, where coordinated action and mutual support are essential.

At the policy level, CERIL-C suggests integrating culturally informed leadership principles into governance systems, HR standards, and leadership development frameworks. Such integration can enhance ethical accountability and long-term sustainability across sectors. Additionally, cross-sector collaboration—through partnerships among public, private, and community actors—can amplify the impact of leadership practices, enabling more effective responses to complex societal challenges.

Limitations

This study is subject to several limitations related to scope and methodology. It focuses on English-language, peer-reviewed studies published between 1996 and 2025, with an emphasis on the Philippines and Southeast Asia. While this enhances contextual depth, it may limit the generalizability of the findings to other regions or cultural settings. Methodologically, the reliance on narrative and thematic synthesis, rather than meta-analysis, restricts the ability to quantify effect sizes and introduces potential interpretive subjectivity. The exclusion of grey literature may also lead to publication bias. Furthermore, the framework's applicability may vary across contexts, particularly in highly structured or technology-driven environments, and the full causal model has yet to be empirically tested.

Future research should focus on empirically validating the CERIL-C framework across diverse organizational and cultural contexts. Advanced analytical methods such as PLS-SEM and multilevel SEM can be used to test the proposed relationships and mediation pathways. Developing reliable measurement scales for indigenous values and leadership constructs will also be essential for strengthening empirical rigor and enabling comparative studies.

Further work is needed to explore causal mechanisms through experimental and longitudinal designs, particularly to capture dynamic processes such as resilience and recovery over time. Expanding the framework to include additional cultural constructs and incorporating multi-source, multi-level data will enhance validity and contextual sensitivity. Cross-cultural replication will be especially important in determining the framework's generalizability and theoretical boundaries.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study advances leadership research in crisis-prone, high-disruption environments by introducing the Culture-Embedded Responsible and Innovative Leadership in Crisis (CERIL-C) framework. The framework offers a culturally grounded explanation of how leadership influences employee engagement, organizational resilience, and firm performance. Based on a systematic synthesis of 41 high-quality studies—including randomized controlled trials, longitudinal and quasi-experimental designs, and culturally contextualized research—the findings identify consistent causal pathways linking responsible and innovative leadership behaviors to dual organizational outcomes through employee engagement. The study shows that leadership effectiveness in crisis contexts depends on integrating transformational, ethical, adaptive, and directive behaviors. By conceptualizing responsible leadership as a Type II higher-order construct and distinguishing resilience and

performance as parallel outcomes, the framework clarifies previously fragmented concepts and mechanisms in the literature.

A key theoretical contribution of CERIL-C is the reconceptualization of culture as a generative microfoundation rather than a contextual moderator. Filipino values—*kapwa*, *bayanihan*, and *malasakit*—are positioned as active mechanisms shaping leadership cognition, guiding behavior, and strengthening engagement-driven pathways to organizational outcomes. This perspective embeds cultural logic directly into leadership processes, addressing a critical gap in collectivist and crisis-sensitive contexts. The framework further advances the field by proposing eight falsifiable propositions that enable rigorous empirical testing using methods such as PLS-SEM and multilevel modeling. Beyond theory, CERIL-C offers actionable insights for practice, emphasizing the integration of directive clarity, adaptive flexibility, ethical judgment, and innovation, alongside culturally grounded relational practices. It also highlights the broader societal value of such leadership in fostering social cohesion and community resilience. Future research should focus on longitudinal, experimental, and cross-cultural validation of the model, as well as the development of reliable measures for indigenous leadership constructs to strengthen empirical rigor and support cumulative theory building.

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