Patterns of Relationships Between College Teachers’ Leadership Competence and Work Engagement in Selected Private Higher Education Institutions in Davao Region: The Mediating Impact of School as Professional Learning Community

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Abstract:
This study explores the correlation between leadership competence and work engagement among college teachers in Davao region's private higher education institutions. Adopting a mediation model, it investigates the influence of the school as a professional learning community on this relationship. Through a quantitative nonexperimental descriptive-correlational approach, 105 college teachers who were selected using cluster sampling technique from selected private higher education institutions participated in the survey. The findings reveal high levels of leadership competence, work engagement, and perception of the school as a professional learning community among the college teachers. It was also found that there are significant positive correlations among leadership competence, school as a professional learning community, and work engagement. Furthermore, the study identifies the school as a professional learning community as a significant mediating factor, partially explaining the correlation between leadership competence and work engagement. These results underline the importance of fostering a supportive and collaborative school environment to enhance leadership competence and teacher engagement in Davao region's private higher education institutions. This study sheds light on the crucial role of school as a professional learning community, offering insights for educational policymakers and administrators seeking to champion leadership competence and work engagement of college teachers in the 21st century.

Keywords: leadership competence, work engagement, school as a professional learning community, college teachers, private higher education institutions, Davao Region, Philippines.

Introduction
In private higher education institutions in the Philippines, the interplay between leadership competence, work engagement, and professional learning community among college teachers remains a critical concern. While these institutions strive for academic excellence, challenges persist in ensuring that teachers possess adequate leadership skills and maintain high levels of engagement in their roles. Moreover, the need for solid structures for fostering a professional learning community exacerbates these challenges, potentially impeding the development of innovative teaching practices and collaborative initiatives. Understanding the current status quo is imperative for addressing these challenges and...
effectively enhancing teacher effectiveness and the overall quality of education within private higher education institutions in a developing country like the Philippines.

Prior research has identified a prevalent deficiency in work engagement levels across different regions worldwide, including within educational environments (Sudibjo & Riantini, 2023). Consequently, further investigation is warranted to gain a deeper comprehension of this phenomenon (Cacciamani et al., 2022). The Bureau of National Affairs, as highlighted by the Tasmanian Government (2021), underscores that disengagement and a pervasive sense of stagnation have emerged as the fastest-growing drivers of resignations on a global scale. This trend is underscored by the concerning statistics from the United States, where a substantial 57% of full-time teachers lack engagement in their work, leading to a staggering 2.3 million missed workdays (Hastings & Agrawal, 2015). Notably, this issue extends beyond mere disinterest, as teachers in Washington have reported active disengagement from their roles (Moeny, 2015).

The ramifications of this disengagement are multi-faceted, encompassing distractions within the work environment and an overall detachment from the very essence of their profession. This sentiment is echoed by McClure (2022), who contends that rectifying the prevailing disengagement necessitates cultivating a more supportive and enriching workplace culture. Crucially, disengagement transcends a surface-level lack of interest, representing a profound disconnection from the intrinsic motivations that drive individuals to teach (Froehlich, 2021). Amidst an educational landscape increasingly prioritizing quality, the nature of the teaching profession undergoes transformative shifts, further complicating the dynamics of teacher engagement (Santmajor, Goveasm, & James, 2022).

Focusing on the Philippine education system, the issue of teacher work engagement takes center stage, echoing concerns on a global scale. A significant group of 247 teachers within public schools expresses a disconnect and declining interest in their teaching responsibilities, leading to a propensity for negative discussions about their profession (Bravo et al., 2021). This alarming trend underscores the need to explore the factors contributing to this phenomenon comprehensively. Diverse perceptions about the status of teachers and their role further complicate matters. At the same time, teaching is still respected, and challenges such as perceived inadequate pay, challenging working conditions, and limited avenues for professional growth create a more complex landscape (SEAMEO INNOTECH, 2020; Cabato, 2018).

The issue of teacher work engagement resonates with global trends, where teachers are facing a growing sense of detachment and reduced enthusiasm for their instructional roles, leading to disengagement and withdrawal from aspects of their work (Shi et al., 2019; McClure & Fryar, 2022). The pervasive psychological impact of the ongoing pandemic further compounds these challenges, elevating risks to teachers' dedication, engagement, and job satisfaction amidst the persistent uncertainty (Oliveira et al., 2018). This concern is further echoed in Region XI, where faculty turnover underscores broader institutional challenges that may contribute to disengagement (Heruela, 2021). A study in Mindanao illuminates the relationship between the fear of COVID-19 and remote teaching burnout, highlighting the impact of heightened pandemic-related concerns on teacher well-being and engagement (Carreon et al., 2020). Similarly, teachers in Davao Region navigate an uncertain period due to pandemic disruptions, potentially amplifying the sense of disengagement noted internationally (Allen, Rowan, & Singh, 2020).

A significant research gap surfaces within the Philippines, specifically in the Davao region, concerning the unexplored landscape of the mediating influence of a school functioning as a professional learning community on the intricate relationship between leadership competence and work engagement among teachers in higher
education institutions. Despite emerging interest in professional learning communities beyond Western nations, limited attention has been paid to Asian contexts (Qiao, Yu, & Zhang, 2018; Zhang & Pang, 2016), including the Philippines. This void becomes more pronounced when coupled with the contemporary imperative to cultivate leadership competence among teachers in higher education (Chemodanova et al., 2022).

Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to examine the relationship between college teachers' leadership competence and work engagement through the mediating role of the school as a professional learning community in selected private higher education institutions in the Davao region. Specifically, this study pursued to answer the subsequent questions:

1. What is the level of leadership competence of college teachers in selected private higher education institutions in the Davao region in terms of culture and context, professional learning and growth, instructional leadership, and school community and advocacy?

2. What is the level of work engagement of college teachers in selected private higher education institutions in the Davao region in terms of emotional engagement, social engagement, behavioral engagement, and cognitive engagement?

3. What is the level of school as a professional learning community as perceived by college teachers in selected private higher education institutions in the Davao region in terms of shared and supportive leadership, shared values and vision, collective learning and application, shared personal practice, supportive conditions—relationships, and supportive conditions—structures?

4. Is there a significant relationship between leadership competence and the work engagement of college teachers in selected private higher education institutions in the Davao region?

5. Is there a significant relationship between leadership competence and school as a professional learning community as perceived by college teachers in selected private higher education institutions in the Davao region?

6. Is there a significant relationship between the school as a professional learning community and the work engagement of college teachers in selected private higher education institutions in the Davao region?

7. Is there a mediating effect of the school as a professional learning community on the relationship between leadership competence and work engagement of college teachers in selected private higher education institutions in the Davao region?

Hypotheses

This research study had the following null hypotheses, which were tested at α 0.05 level of significance:

H₀₁. There is no significant relationship between leadership competence and the work engagement of college teachers in selected private higher education institutions in the Davao region.

H₀₂. There is no significant relationship between leadership competence and school as a professional learning community as perceived by college teachers in selected private higher education institutions in the Davao region.

H₀₃. There is no significant relationship between the school as a professional learning community and the work engagement of college teachers in selected private higher education institutions in the Davao region.

H₀₄. There is no mediating effect of the school as a professional learning community on the relationship between leadership competence and work engagement of college teachers in selected private higher education institutions in the Davao region.

Materials and Methods

The researcher employed a quantitative nonexperimental descriptive-correlational research design with path analysis to investigate the relationships between leadership
competence and work engagement, and the mediating role of school as a professional learning community among 105 private college teachers in selected higher education institutions in Davao, Region XI, Mindanao, Philippines. Respondents were selected using cluster sampling, meeting specific criteria including male or female, of legal age, and employed in a private higher education institution recognized by the Commission on Higher Education XI. They voluntarily provided informed consent for their participation.

Moreover, the research instrument comprised an adapted, validated, and pilot-tested 3-part survey questionnaire, incorporating scales such as the Teacher Leadership Competencies' Scale (Center for Teaching Quality, National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, & National Education Association, 2014), the Educator Engagement Survey (Communities In Schools (CIS®) & American Institutes for Research, 2020), and the Schools as Professional Learning Communities scale (Olivier & Hipp, 2010). All indicators in each domain were measured on a 5-Point Likert scale. This study’s research instruments were adapted from existing scales with reliability and validity established.

Statistical tools, including the mean, Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient, and Path Analysis, were utilized to analyze the data. Ethical clearance was obtained from the Holy Cross of Davao College Research Ethics Committee, wherein the researcher adhered to the nine ethical consideration components, namely social value, informed consent, risk, benefits, and safety, privacy and confidentiality of information, justice, transparency, qualification of the researcher, adequacy of facilities, and community involvement.

Results

The findings presented in this section provide answers about the levels of leadership competence, work engagement, and perception of the school as a professional learning community among college teachers in selected private higher education institutions in the Davao region. The study examines the multifaceted aspects of leadership competence, including culture and context, professional learning and growth, instructional leadership, and school community and advocacy. It also delves into various dimensions of work engagement, encompassing emotional, social, behavioral, and cognitive engagement.

Additionally, the research explores college teachers' perceptions of the school as a professional learning community, covering shared and supportive leadership, shared values and vision, collective learning and application, shared personal practice, supportive conditions-relationships, and supportive condition-structures. Furthermore, it investigates the significant relationships between leadership competence, work engagement, and the perception of the school as a professional learning community, as well as the mediating effect of the latter on the former two variables.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership Competence Domains</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Descriptive Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Culture and Context</td>
<td>4.46</td>
<td>Very High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Learning and Growth</td>
<td>4.51</td>
<td>Very High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Leadership</td>
<td>4.36</td>
<td>Very High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Community and Advocacy</td>
<td>4.44</td>
<td>Very High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>4.44</td>
<td>Very High</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first objective of this study is to determine the level of leadership competence of college teachers in selected private higher education institutions in the Davao region in terms of culture and context, professional learning and growth, instructional leadership, and school community and advocacy.

Table 1 presents the level of leadership competence among college teachers in selected private higher education institutions in the Davao region across various domains. The mean scores for each domain indicate the following
levels: culture and context (M=4.46) with a very high level; professional learning and growth (M=4.51) with a very high level; instructional leadership (M=4.36) with a very high level; school community and advocacy (M=4.44) with a very high level. Consequently, the composite mean score of 4.44, or very high, reveals that college teachers in the Davao Region exhibit excellent leadership competence.

Table 2. Level of Work Engagement of College Teachers in Selected Private Higher Education Institutions in Davao Region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work Engagement Domains</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Descriptive Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Engagement</td>
<td>4.41</td>
<td>Very High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Engagement</td>
<td>4.30</td>
<td>Very High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral Engagement</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>Very High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive Engagement</td>
<td>4.35</td>
<td>Very High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>4.35</td>
<td>Very High</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The second objective of this study is to determine the level of work engagement of college teachers in selected private higher education institutions in the Davao region in terms of emotional engagement, social engagement, behavioral engagement, and cognitive engagement.

Table 2 presents the level of work engagement among college teachers in selected private higher education institutions in the Davao region across various dimensions. The mean scores for each dimension indicate the following levels: emotional engagement (M=4.41) with a very high level; social engagement (M=4.30) with a very high level; behavioral engagement (M=4.33) with a very high level; cognitive engagement (M=4.35) with a very high level. Consequently, the overall mean score of 4.35, or very high, reveals that work engagement among college teachers in Davao Region is always manifested.

The third objective of this study is to determine the level of school as a professional learning community as perceived by college teachers in selected private higher education institutions in the Davao region in terms of shared and supportive leadership, shared values and vision, collective learning and application, shared personal practice, supportive conditions-relationships, and supportive conditions-structures.

Table 3. Level of School as a Professional Learning Community as Perceived by College Teachers in Selected Private Higher Education Institutions in Davao Region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School as a Professional Learning Community Domains</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Descriptive Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shared and Supportive Leadership</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared Values and Vision</td>
<td>4.36</td>
<td>Very High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collective Learning and Application</td>
<td>4.30</td>
<td>Very High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared Personal Practice</td>
<td>4.28</td>
<td>Very High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportive Conditions-Relationships</td>
<td>4.28</td>
<td>Very High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportive Conditions-Structures</td>
<td>4.30</td>
<td>Very High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>4.28</td>
<td>Very High</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 presents the level of perception regarding school as a professional learning community among college teachers in selected private higher education institutions in the Davao region across various dimensions. The mean scores for each dimension indicate the following levels: shared and supportive leadership (M=4.17) with a high level; shared values and vision (M=4.36) with a very high level; collective learning and application (M=4.30) with a very high level; shared personal practice (M=4.28) with a very high level; supportive conditions-relationships (M=4.28) with a very high level; supportive conditions-structures (M=4.30) with a very high level. Accordingly, the overall mean score of 4.28, or very high, indicates that college teachers in the Davao region perceive their institutions as professional learning communities characterized by shared values, collaborative learning, supportive structures, and leadership practices.
The fourth objective of this study is to explore if there is a significant relationship between leadership competence and the work engagement of college teachers in selected private higher education institutions in the Davao region.

The correlation coefficient (r) obtained in the Pearson correlation coefficient statistical analysis was 0.479, indicating a significant moderate positive correlation between leadership competency and work engagement. This signifies that as leadership competence increases, there is a tendency for work engagement among higher education institution teachers also to increase. The p-value associated with the correlation coefficient was calculated to be 0.000. This p-value is less than the commonly used significance level of 0.05, indicating strong evidence against the null hypothesis one (H₀₁) of no correlation. Consequently, this leads to the decision to reject the null hypothesis, revealing a relationship that exists between leadership competence and work engagement among college teachers in selected private higher education institutions in Davao region.

The fifth objective of this study is to explore if there is a significant relationship between leadership competence and school as a professional learning community as perceived by college teachers in selected private higher education institutions in the Davao region.

The correlation coefficient (r) obtained in the Pearson correlation coefficient statistical analysis was 0.425, indicating a significant moderate positive correlation between leadership competency and school as a professional learning community as perceived by college teachers in selected private higher education institutions in the Davao region. This signifies that higher levels of leadership competence are associated with a substantial presence of a professional learning community. The p-value associated with the correlation coefficient was calculated to be 0.000. This p-value is less than the commonly used significance level of 0.05, indicating strong evidence against the null hypothesis two (H₀₂), which proposed no correlation between leadership competence and school as a professional learning community as perceived by college teachers. Consequently, this leads to the decision to reject the null hypothesis two, revealing a relationship that exists between leadership competence and school as a professional learning community as perceived by college teachers in selected private higher education institutions in Davao region.
Table 6. Significant Relationship Between the School as a Professional Learning Community and the Work Engagement of College Teachers in Selected Private Higher Education Institutions in Davao Region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work Engagement</th>
<th>r</th>
<th>p-value</th>
<th>Decision on ( H_0 )</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School as a Professional Learning Community</td>
<td>.374</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>Reject</td>
<td>Significant Weak Positive Correlation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

The sixth objective of this study is to explore if there is a significant relationship between the school as a professional learning community and the work engagement of college teachers in selected private higher education institutions in the Davao region.

The correlation coefficient (\( r \)) obtained in the Pearson correlation coefficient statistical analysis was 0.374, indicating a significant but weak positive correlation between school as a professional learning community and work engagement. This finding suggests that a higher presence of a professional learning community is associated with a reasonable increase in work engagement among college teachers in selected private higher education institutions in the Davao region. Although the correlation is weak, it is still statistically significant, indicating a association between school as a professional learning community as perceived by college teachers and their work engagement. The p-value associated with the correlation coefficient was calculated to be 0.000. This p-value is less than the commonly used significance level of 0.05, indicating strong evidence against the null hypothesis three (\( H_0 \)) of no correlation. Consequently, this leads to the decision to reject the null hypothesis three, revealing a relationship that exists between school as a professional learning community as perceived by college teachers in selected private higher education institutions in Davao region and their work engagement.

Table 7. Mediating Effect of the School as a Professional Learning Community on the Relationship Between Leadership Competence and Work Engagement of College Teachers in Selected Private Higher Education Institutions in Davao Region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mediation Analysis Results</th>
<th>Estimate</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>z-value</th>
<th>p-value</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct Effect</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Competence → Work Engagement</td>
<td>0.351</td>
<td>0.089</td>
<td>3.956</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
<td>0.177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indirect Effect</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Competence → School as Professional Learning Community → Work Engagement</td>
<td>0.089</td>
<td>0.042</td>
<td>2.109</td>
<td>0.035</td>
<td>0.006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Effect</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Competence → Work Engagement</td>
<td>0.440</td>
<td>0.082</td>
<td>5.335</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
<td>0.278</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The seventh objective of this study is to unearth if there is mediating effect of the school as a professional learning community on the relationship between leadership competence and work engagement of college teachers in selected private higher education institutions in the Davao region.

The direct effect analysis reveals a statistically significant relationship between leadership
competence and work engagement among college teachers in the selected private higher education institutions in the Davao region ($z = 3.956, p < .001$). The estimate of .351 indicates that for each unit increase in leadership competence, work engagement is predicted to increase by .351 units. The 95% confidence interval (.177, .525) suggests that we are fairly confident in this estimate, as it does not include zero. Moreover, the indirect effect analysis examines the influence of leadership competence on work engagement through the mediator of school as a professional learning community. The estimate of .089 ($z = 2.109, p = .035$) suggests a significant indirect effect. This implies that a portion of the relationship between leadership competence and work engagement operates through the mediation of the school as a professional learning community partially. The 95% confidence interval (.006, .171) also supports the significance of this indirect effect. Therefore, with the findings obtained, null hypothesis four ($H_04$) is rejected.

In addition, the total effects analysis provides an outline of the conjoined direct and indirect effects. The estimate of .440 ($z = 5.335, p < .001$) indicates a significant relationship between leadership competence and work engagement, considering both direct and indirect pathways. This suggests that the school as a professional learning community partially mediates the relationship between leadership competence and work engagement among college teachers in the Davao region. The statistical findings highlight the importance of leadership competence and a professional learning community within schools in shaping college teachers' work engagement. The direct effect underscores the significance of leadership competence in fostering work engagement, indicating that if teachers exhibit leadership competence, it plays a crucial role in their motivation and engagement in their work.

Looking closely at the indirect effect, the type of mediation observed in the relationship between college teachers' leadership competence and work engagement, with the school as a professional learning community as the mediator, is partial mediation. With this, the significant indirect effect suggests that establishing a professional learning community within schools is a pathway through which leadership competence influences work engagement. This underscores the importance of creating environments that support collaborative learning, shared goals, and continuous professional development among college teachers.

Figure 1. Path Diagram of the Mediation Analysis Model in which School as a Professional Learning Community Mediates the Effect of College Teachers’ Leadership Competence on their Work Engagement

Legend: WrE: Work Engagement; SaaPLC: School as a Professional Learning Community; LdC: Leadership Competence

Discussion

College teachers in the Davao Region exhibit a commendable level of leadership competence across various dimensions, as evidenced by their proficiency in culture and context, professional learning and growth, instructional leadership, and school, community, and advocacy. This assertion is further supported by Von Dohlen and Karvonen's (2018) research, which examined leadership behaviors among teachers in North Carolina, emphasizing the prevalence of effective leadership practices within educational settings. Moreover, work engagement among Davao Region college teachers consistently manifests through emotional, social, behavioral, and cognitive engagement, aligning with D'Amico et al.'s
(2020) findings of heightened work engagement and job satisfaction among Italian teachers.

Additionally, college teachers in the Davao Region perceive a strong professional learning community within their institutions, characterized by shared and supportive leadership, collective learning and application, and supportive conditions-structures. This perception aligns with the findings of Gonzales (2023), who assessed professional learning communities among 210 faculty members in public higher education institutions in Region II, Philippines, and found a high level of evidence for different dimensions of professional learning community. Furthermore, the research unveils a significant positive correlation between leadership competence and work engagement among college teachers in selected private higher education institutions in the Davao region, consistent with the findings of Zahed-Babelan et al. (2019) and Hidayat et al. (2020), who also observed similar correlations between leadership and work engagement. This correlation underscores the pivotal role of leadership in enhancing teacher well-being and performance.

Moreover, the study indicates a significant positive correlation between leadership competence and the perception of schools as professional learning communities among college teachers in the Davao region. This correlation is reinforced by Hamzah and Jamil’s (2019) and Ibrahim et al.’s (2019) findings, emphasizing the influence of leadership in shaping professional learning communities within educational institutions. Additionally, a significant but weak positive correlation is observed between schools as professional learning communities and work engagement among college teachers in the Davao region, which can be substantiated by Cai et al.’s (2022) research, which emphasizes the role of professional learning communities in enhancing teacher self-efficacy and work engagement.

Furthermore, school as a professional learning community partially mediates the relationship between leadership competence and work engagement of college teachers in selected private higher education institutions in the Davao region. This finding is backed by literature indicating that professional learning communities significantly promote teacher leadership (Lee & Ip, 2023). Furthermore, collaborative support within professional learning communities has been shown to enhance work engagement, develop teacher confidence, and foster persistence in facing challenges (Pyhältö et al., 2015, as cited by Reynolds, 2016). These findings highlight the importance of cultivating professional learning communities within educational institutions to enhance teacher leadership and their work engagement, ultimately contributing to a positive teaching and learning environment.

The findings of the study indicating that schools as a professional learning community partially mediate the relationship between leadership competence and work engagement of college teachers in selected private higher education institutions in the Davao region align with the principles of Self-Determination Theory (SDT) by Deci and Ryan (1985). According to SDT, individuals are motivated to engage in activities that fulfill their basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. In the context of professional learning communities, the collaborative and supportive environment fosters autonomy by providing teachers with opportunities for decision-making and self-direction in their professional growth. Additionally, the collective learning and shared practices within these communities enhance teachers’ sense of competence by facilitating skill development and mastery experiences. Furthermore, the supportive relationships cultivated within professional learning communities fulfill the need for relatedness, promoting a sense of belonging and connection among teachers. Thus, by satisfying these fundamental psychological needs, professional learning communities serve as a catalyst for enhancing leadership competence and work engagement among college teachers, as observed in the study.
Conclusion

The research findings indicate that college teachers in the Davao Region demonstrate remarkable leadership competence across various domains and consistently exhibit high levels of work engagement. Their perception of professional learning communities within their institutions underscores the importance of collaborative and supportive environments in fostering teacher development. Moreover, the significant positive correlations observed between leadership competence, work engagement, and school as a professional learning community emphasize the interconnectedness of these facets in enhancing teacher effectiveness and satisfaction. Furthermore, a partial mediating impact of professional learning communities on the relationship between leadership competence and work engagement highlights the role of supportive organizational structures in facilitating teacher engagement and well-being. These findings underscore the significance of cultivating leadership competence and fostering professional learning communities within educational institutions to promote teacher effectiveness and job satisfaction in the Davao Region.

Educational institutions should continue to give due importance to the establishment, enhancement, and praxis of professional learning communities. This can be achieved through fostering a culture of collaboration, providing opportunities for shared leadership, promoting collective learning and application, and ensuring supportive conditions and relationships within the institution. Additionally, investing in leadership development programs that focus on enhancing leadership competence among faculty members can further strengthen the mediating role of professional learning communities. By actively cultivating such environments, educational institutions can effectively facilitate teacher engagement and well-being.

Lastly, further research exploring teacher leadership competence, work engagement, and school as a professional learning community in the context of the Philippines is warranted to deepen the understanding and contribute significantly to the existing literature. By investigating these factors within the Philippine educational landscape, future studies can elucidate the unique challenges, opportunities, and dynamics at play, thereby informing evidence-based practices and interventions. Such research endeavors hold the potential to enhance educational policies, leadership development, strategic initiatives, and institutional praxis.

Acknowledgement

The researcher sincerely appreciates Dr. Alona S. Galache, the research advisor, and the panel of examiners - Dr. Giovannie Montejo, Dr. Marleonic M. Bauyot, and Dr. Susan S. Cruz, for their generous guidance and expertise throughout this study. Heartfelt appreciation is also extended to Dr. Niel Bryan B. Booc for being the researcher's statistician. Gratitude is also extended to the college teachers in selected private higher education institutions in the Davao Region who participated as respondents and whose invaluable contributions were integral to the research process. The researcher is deeply thankful to his family, particularly Benjamin S. Abendaño Jr and Ma. Teresita O. Abendaño, his parents, and Cora O. Abendaño, his sister, for their unwavering support and belief, which served as a constant source of motivation. Special thanks also to the researcher's best friends who pushed him to finish this scholarly work in due time, Kevin Paul C. Bonotan, Felmark B. Fuego, and Maricel C. Cayas.

Ethics Statement

Since this study involved human participants, this study was reviewed and approved by the Ethics Committee of the Holy Cross of Davao College dated April 13, 2023. The respondents of this study provided their written informed consent, which signifies their voluntary participation in this study.
Conflict of Interest

The author affirms that the research was undertaken without any commercial or financial affiliations that might present a conflict of interest.

References


