

The Mediating Effect of Work Motivation on the Relationship Between Distributed Leadership of School Heads and Teacher Retention

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ABSTRACT

This study determined the mediating effect of work motivation on the relationship between distributed leadership and teacher retention in private schools in Davao City. The descriptive-correlational quantitative research design was used in this study. An adapted survey questionnaire was utilized to gather data from 320 Basic Education teachers across 55 private schools in Davao City. The respondents were chosen using proportionate stratified random sampling. The statistical tools employed for data analysis were Mean, Person Product Moment Correlation, Linear Regression Analysis, and Sobel z-test. The results revealed that the level of distributed leadership and teacher retention was very high, while work motivation was high. A significant positive relationship was found between distributed leadership and teacher retention, distributed leadership and work motivation, and work motivation and teacher retention. Further, work motivation partially mediated the relationship between distributed leadership and teacher retention. This implies the pivotal role of distributed leadership in elevating teacher retention and work motivation in private schools; hence, school administrators may establish a supportive work environment, collaborative leadership, professional growth opportunities, and recognition of teachers' noteworthy performance and contributions.

Keywords: educational management, Basic Education teachers, mediation, descriptive-correlational, quantitative, distributed leadership, teacher retention, work motivation, private schools, Philippines

SDG Indicators:

3 (Good Health and Well-being),

4 (Quality Education),

8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth)

INTRODUCTION

Teacher retention is an indispensable issue that has become a pressing concern besetting school leaders of private educational institutions in recent years. This phenomenon is observable worldwide where approximately 40% to 50% of newly appointed teachers decide to abandon their profession or transfer during the initial five years of their career (Shuls & Flores, 2020). Similarly, the Philippines wrestles with teacher retention concerns as private institutions experience an annual loss of 132 teachers (Cabigas, 2019). For five years, before the pandemic, 1,500 teachers emigrated yearly for overseas opportunities

(Aranda, 2023) while shifting to DepEd schools which threatened private school enrolment and may lead to closures (Rosario, 2020 & Pinlac 2022).

Teacher retention in schools plays a pivotal role in driving progress toward the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (Azabo, Gaito, Asiimwe, & Mugenyi 2023). In addition, Sumipo (2020) and Urick (2020) highlighted that it is of utmost importance for the success of schools since the retention of skilled teachers may impact student learning and increase student achievement. Moreover, securing employee retention is the lifeblood of an organization like an educational institution hence, school leaders acknowledge that the workforce is fundamental in the school operations because human resources play a vital role in attaining success (Areola & Domalaon, 2023). These implications lead to the aim of bolstering and accentuating the significance of this study.

Teachers in schools that employ distributed leadership unveiled that they are given the chance to lead which makes their school culture conducive (Printy & Liu 2021). In this school culture according to Kavgaci and Öztürk (2023) under the distributed leadership model, the teachers' involvement and empowerment are fostered, dedication is enhanced, and issues of quitting the teaching job are mitigated. Moreover, qualities of distributed leadership which is considered to support school improvement as a leadership framework may support teacher retention (Sulit, 2020).

Additionally, teachers perceived distributed leadership as analogous to their job satisfaction which is indicated in the study by Liu, Bellibaş, and Gümüş (2021). In addition, Torres (2019) posited that teachers' job satisfaction is positively associated with their perceptions of distributed leadership. Lest, sharing leadership roles with the teachers by the school principal will eventually establish systems and procedures that would ensure the daily operations of the entire school and maintain a conducive work environment that will foster the growth and motivation of teachers (Thien & Chan, 2022). Thus, distributed leadership and work motivation are closely linked to each other as they become instrumental in holding their teachers to stay in their teaching positions.

Work motivation is considered an essential catalyst for the success of organizations, as it promotes employees' effective performance (Vo, Tuliao, & Chen, 2022). As cited by Aguenza et al. (2018), increased motivation among teachers leads to improved productivity and reduced intention to leave, as heightened motivation corresponds to greater job satisfaction. Also, Anog, de Vera, and Peteros (2024) espoused in their study the vital role of a nurturing work environment in influencing school commitment, job satisfaction, and teacher retention. Moreover, teachers decide to stay teaching in private schools because of motivational factors such as satisfaction with their tasks, engagement in healthy working academe, increase in pay and other incentives, and immersion in professional growth opportunities (Ching, Beboso & Naparan, 2023). Consequently, when teachers experience work motivation and collegial support through teacher collaboration, they express an intention to remain in the profession or workplace.

Distributed leadership refers to a team of individuals establishing interaction and working interdependently guided by leadership practices to achieve a common goal. Likewise, distributed leadership creates a positive effect on teachers' professional learning (Bektaş, Kılınc, & Gümüş 2022) and fosters independence among teachers, an increased sense of collegiality, boundless possibilities of establishing synergy, and collaboration that inspires them through purposeful teamwork where they engage in leadership responsibilities alongside their principals and that may support teacher retention (Sulit & Davidson, 2020).

Consequently, it is indicated that distributed leadership allows the teachers to have autonomy and collaborate with their colleagues (Sabina, et. al 2023). Evertson, (2020) stressed that distributed leadership

posed significance in ameliorating efforts and building the instructional capacity of the teachers. Apart from this, the effects of distributed leadership having instilled teacher collaboration along with instructional leadership are correlated to the teachers' job satisfaction and self-efficacy, respectively (Liu, Bellibaş, & Gümüş, 2021). Having these positive effects on teachers, it is indicated that this type of leadership can stiffen quality education delivery even in complex demands in education (Jakobsen, Kjeldsen, & Pallesen, 2023).

On the other hand, teacher retention results when factors in the workplace such as opportunities to strengthen collegial support, cultivate creativity, engagement with the learners, and fulfillment in teaching are experienced by teachers (Perryman & Calvert, 2020). It is notable that when a school retains its teachers, it could lead to intensified student academic growth (Berry et al., 2021; Coffin & Meghjani 2020). In short, teachers are vital to quality education that makes them instrumental in attaining students' development and school improvement (Koppelberger, 2023). Hence, retaining those who are capable and effective is of utmost importance to benefit the schools.

Scharton (2018) suggested that students' performance may be enhanced if exceptionally skilled teachers remain in the classrooms for three consecutive three years in contrast to students who do not experience the consistent presence of high-quality teachers in that timeline. Teacher retention can be achieved in an educational institution when engagement among teachers is influenced by motivation and other elements that contribute to job satisfaction (Kamaruzaman, et al., 2022). Similarly, educational institutions that enhance the work environment make working conditions cozy (Basalamah & As'ad, 2021). Further, Hashim (2023) revealed that teacher retention is improved when strategies to nurture well-being and job satisfaction are implemented.

Motivation is a factor that impacts human behavior sustainability (Otacioglu, 2024). As an inherent trait, it makes people typically engage in a task as long as its value is understood. Moreover, motivation among teachers is tantamount to effective teaching which fosters the learning outcomes of the students (Cabaron & Oco, 2023). This means that when teachers are empowered psychologically, they show a favorable attitude toward their work. Likewise, when people are motivated, they tend to work harder which may overcome difficulties at the workplace and contribute to the development of the organization (Vo, Tuliao & Chen, 2022).

This is in a similar vein to the findings of the study by Gabriel (2021) that motivational factors like positive workplace relationships and prolific professional growth positively influence teachers to stay. Additionally, Casely-Hayford, et al. (2022) highlighted that workplace motivation like the teachers' state of health and a healthy environment heightens the productivity of teachers. Moreover, in improving teacher performance and well-being, motivation can be utilized since it is associated to job satisfaction and commitment to the organization (Mutesasira & Marongwe, 2024). Further, better pay, more incentives, and professional development through in-service training and off-campus workshops serve as external motivators that may hold teachers to remain in their workplace (Marzuki & Pogo, 2023; Farinola, 2021; Aduna, et al., 2020).

However, despite the plenteous amount of literature about these variables, there is a scarcity of studies that underpin the link between distributed leadership and teacher retention and the mediating role of motivation in their relationship. Having known the existence of distributed leadership before, this study would also like to explore the factors that restrain schools from initiating this type of leadership within their teaching force (Hickey et al., 2022). Only elementary teachers from selected private primary schools were included in the study on distributed leadership; thus, there is a need to increase the chances of getting

more points for analyses (Samancioglu, Baglibel, & Erwin 2020; Harris, Jones, & Ismail 2022). Moreover, only financial motivation was underscored in some studies in identifying what may influence teachers’ retention decisions (Aulia & Hernanin, 2022). This context serves as the impetus for the researcher to determine the relationship between these variables. This research will offer valuable insights for school leaders to acquire the necessary skills on how to use distributed leadership in their schools and how to create a supportive work environment that may stiffen teachers' commitment and maximize their retention intention.

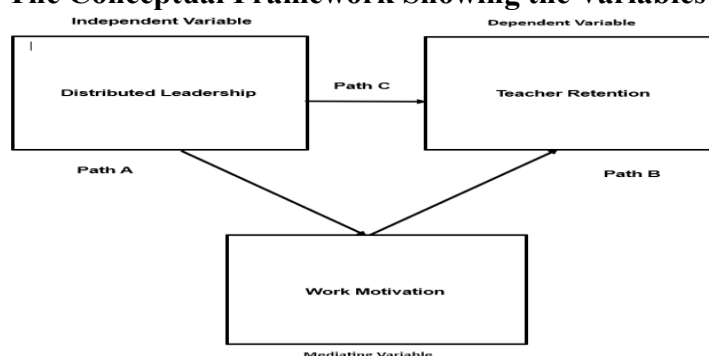
In light of this concern, this study aims to determine the mediating effect of work motivation on the relationship between distributed leadership and teacher retention. Specifically, this study has the following objectives: to ascertain the level of distributed leadership in private schools; to determine the factors that influence teachers to remain in their profession; to describe the level of work motivation of teachers; to establish the significant relationship between distributed leadership and teacher retention; to assess the significant relationship between distributed leadership and the work motivation of teachers; and to identify the significant relationship between work motivation and teacher retention. Lastly, this study will ascertain the mediating effect of work motivation on the relationship between distributed leadership and teacher retention. In summary, this study will offer indispensable perspectives into how work motivation mediates the relationship between distributed leadership and teacher retention in private schools.

The following null hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance. First, there is no significant relationship between distributed leadership and teacher retention, distributed leadership and work motivation, and teacher retention and work motivation. Second, there is no mediating effect of work motivation on the relationship between distributed leadership and teacher retention in private schools.

Drawing from the grounds of the studies and theories mentioned above, the following assumptions are consequently formed: distributed leadership positively correlates with teacher retention; motivation is influenced by distributed leadership while work motivation optimizes teacher retention. These assumptions are illustrated in Figure 1, which shows the conceptual framework that shows the relationships of the three variables in the study, particularly distributed leadership, teacher retention, and work motivation.

Path A illustrates the influence of distributed leadership on teachers’ motivation which highlights the likelihood that teachers may feel empowered and motivated when leadership is well-distributed. Path B, on the other hand, shows how work motivation may influence teacher retention, which may result in increased job satisfaction and decreased turnover intentions. Path C highlights the relationship between distributed leadership and teacher retention without work motivation as a mediator, which points out that when leadership is properly shared among teachers, this may encourage them to stay.

Figure 1. The Conceptual Framework Showing the Variables of the Study



The study's independent variable is distributed leadership which refers to a shared and combined interaction and decision-making among school leaders and subordinates who work toward a common goal. It is adapted from the study established by Davis (2009) with the following indicators: school organization, school vision, school culture, instructional program, artifacts, teacher leadership, and principal leadership. On the other hand, the dependent variable is teacher retention which pertains to the number of teachers who remain in their present schools a year after or over the years. It involves five components: administration and policy, working with students, resources, intrinsic rewards of teaching, and employment conditions (Ansley, et al., 2019; Jardinella, 2023). The mediating variable of this study is work motivation. Mainly, work motivation refers to an employee's drive to exert effort in their tasks (Vallerand, 1989; 2009 & Tremblay, et. al 2009). The Work Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation Scale (WEIMS) instrument was adapted using the factors from Blois Inventory of Work Motivation developed by Vallerand (1989) and adapted by Tremblay, et. al (2002) which included the indicators: intrinsic motivation, integrated regulation, identified regulation, introjected regulation, external regulation, and motivation.

This study is anchored on the Social Exchange Theory (SET) which was first introduced by Homans (1958) and later refined by Blau (1964). This theory outlines social interactions and human relationships which when cultivated by people can develop into trust, loyalty, job satisfaction, and commitment to the organization. The SET according to Blau unravels that organizations and managers can nurture employee duties and impact positive attitudes towards work. In addition, Blau emphasized that once employees are placed in a favorable work environment, they tend to reciprocate with a positive attitude which later affects their turnover intentions. Moreover, Blau (1964) and Weiss and Stevens (1993) pointed out that it further scrutinizes social interactions to distinguish how the past and predicted rewards of the participants mutually mold their decisions and conduct.

Two theories that support the SET are the Job Embeddedness Theory and the Perceived Organizational Support Theory. Job embeddedness theory focuses on the intentions of employees to stay and pertains to the collective influences that anchor a person to a job rather than focusing exclusively on the unfavorable feelings that lead an employee to quit a position (Mitchell, et al, 2001). People are more inclined to remain in their current positions when they experience a strong bond with their job especially if their career paths are available which in turn makes retention more appealing than seeking options outside. The teachers prefer to work in a collaborative school culture and to receive mentorship support which encompasses structured and informal guidance (Gregory, 2020).

On the other hand, Perceived Organizational Support (POS) theory delineates the elements that are more prone to fostering a feeling of perceived organizational support among employees by addressing their socio-emotional requirements like recognizing their heightened efforts. Similarly, Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) found that employees with elevated levels of POS tend to hold a positive outlook on their jobs and demonstrate greater allegiance to their organization. In general, the perception of organizational support is anticipated to generate positive outcomes for both employees (such as recognition of their efforts, heightened job satisfaction, improved emotional well-being, and decreased work-related stress) and managers (such as intensified commitment, enhanced dedication, and performance towards accomplishing organizational objectives, and increased engagement).

This study focuses on the mediating effect of work motivation on the relationship of distributed leadership and teacher retention which significantly contributes to the existing body of literature on educational leadership and human resource management. Moreover, it furthers the existing body of knowledge by

highlighting evidence-based findings on how shared leadership and empowerment intrinsically contribute to the teachers' motivation. Thus, the findings of this study can be employed by policy-makers and educational leaders worldwide to find strategies to foster teacher satisfaction, organizational commitment, and retention intention that will positively affect the quality of instruction delivery to the learners.

Moreover, the findings of the study are aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), specifically, SDG 3 which fosters good health and well-being; SDG 4, which intends to guarantee quality education and foster lifelong learning opportunities for everyone; and SDG 8 which promotes productive employment, economic growth, and decent work for all. The latter seeks to instill an empowering work environment to ensure that when the three goals are met, teacher well-being is underscored, eventually leading to higher levels of productivity. The findings of this study provide insights that can help promote a work environment where teachers feel motivated, valued, and empowered, leading to a committed and efficient teaching community. With the educators' well-being taken care of, teacher retention intentions become stable and strengthened.

In addition, this study will offer valuable insights for school administrators as this may enhance their understanding of the use of distributed leadership principles and devise methods and approaches that will enrich their school culture and make the work environment engaging and supportive so that retention intentions can be maximized. Furthermore, this study also benefits the teachers as this will foster robust mentoring programs and professional advancement activities which will help improve their standards of teaching.

Above all, future researchers can explore the findings of this study and whether it is effective in public schools. Also, they can further find out which type of motivation is more effective as a mediator. In addition, they can duplicate this study by utilizing different designs and varying participants taken from a wider setting. Finally, the insights presented in this study may be leveraged by future researchers to test the findings across diverse educational settings or examine other motivating factors that may impact teacher retention.

METHOD

This section discusses the research respondents, materials, and instruments as well as the research design and procedure employed in the conduct of the study.

Research Respondents

The population of this study was composed of Basic Education teachers presently employed in the 55 private schools in Davao City clustered into Districts 1, 2, and 3. The city is located on the southeastern coast of Mindanao, Philippines, Davao City spans around 2,444 square kilometers and is situated roughly between 6°58' and 7°34' north latitude and between 125°14' and 125°40' east longitude. The respondents were chosen using the stratified random sampling technique to ensure that personal preconceptions are avoided. This technique which comes from the word "strata" is widely used in surveys (Tafalla, 2021). The total population used was 1,627. Utilizing the Raosoft sample calculator with a five percent margin of error, a 95 percent confidence level, and a 50% response distribution, the computed sample of the study was 320 respondents.

The respondents of the study included class advisers and subject teachers who are presently teaching and have finished at least one school year in any of the Basic Education programs of a private school. Those teachers who were newly hired were excluded from the study as they only had fresh teaching experience

in their respective schools. Also, since classroom teachers are the samples of this study, the school support staff, heads of offices, and school personnel with teaching loads were also excluded.

The respondent's participation in the survey was purely voluntary which means that it will not be taken or requested through the use of tokens or money. Also, the participants were informed that they could withdraw anytime should they feel any unease or have concerns about participating without any requirement to comply like providing a written explanation. Informing their principal and or human resource personnel would suffice to express their decision not to participate in such a way that an alternative participant would be chosen to ensure the survey remains complete. The respondents were also informed by the researcher about the observance of confidentiality of their information and responses through a letter attached to the first page of the questionnaires.

Materials and Instrument

The study used a validated survey instrument to gather the necessary data from the respondents. The questionnaire for work motivation was adapted from Vallerand (1989) and included 18 items to describe the teachers' perception of intrinsic motivation, integrated regulation, identified regulation, introjected regulation, external regulation, and amotivation. The questionnaire on distributed leadership adapted from Davis (2009) contains 37 items indicating the teachers' impression of the presence of distributed leadership practices in their schools in terms of school organization, school vision, school culture, instructional program, artifacts, teacher leadership, and principal leadership. The last part of the instrument adapted from Ansley, et. Al (2019) consists of 27 items that assesses the teachers' perceptions of the factors which influence their decisions to remain employed in their respective schools. It consisted of administration policy, work with students, resources, intrinsic rewards of teaching, and employment conditions.

The questionnaires were designed in a way the respondents may answer promptly. Hence, the Likert scale having the five-point response scale was employed. A Likert Scale is a rating scale utilized to gauge the respondents' level of agreement or disagreement with the modified statements (Taherdots, 2019). Additionally, for evaluation purposes, the scoring guide for analyzing responses within the context of independent and dependent variables was divided into five levels. Range of means from 4.20-5.00 is described as *Very High* implying that work motivation, distributed leadership, and teacher retention are always observed or manifested. Range of means from 3.40- 4.19 is described as *High* and revealing that work motivation, distributed leadership, and teacher retention are frequently or oftentimes observed/ or manifested. Range of means from 2.60-3.39 is described as *moderate* denoting work motivation, distributed leadership, and teacher retention are occasionally observed or manifested. Range of means from 1.80-2.59 is described as *low* implying that work motivation, distributed leadership, and teacher retention are rarely observed/ or manifested. While the range of means from 1.00-1.79 is described as *very low* pointing out that work motivation, distributed leadership, and teacher retention are almost never or never observed/ or manifested.

To gauge the adapted questionnaire's validity, a pilot test was conducted involving the participation of thirty teachers who were not part of the intended target respondents. The three adapted instruments were revealed to have a Cronbach Alpha coefficient of .810 (WM), .958 (DL), and .953 (TR). Moreover, it underwent a validation process by four validation experts from the University of Mindanao Professional Schools and one external validator. The result of the validation process unveils an overall mean of 4.49 implying a strong validity.

Design and Procedure

The study utilized the descriptive-correlational quantitative research design. According to Creswell (20-

14), this quantitative methodology involves the collection of numerical data and subjecting it to analysis through mathematical techniques. On the other hand, Sahin and Mete (2021) asserted that a descriptive design refers to a research style that involves data collection to address inquiries concerning the state of the subject of the study, aiming to attain comprehensive insights and information. A correlation design was adopted since there was an intention to understand the extent of the interconnections and interdependencies among said variables.

In the context of mediation analysis, the Sobel test was employed to evaluate the mediating impact of work motivation on the relationship between distributed leadership and teacher retention. This test was used to determine if the decrease in the effect of the independent variable remains statistically significant upon incorporating the mediator into the model. It also examined the statistical significance of the mediation effect itself (Cicek & Bicer, 2015).

To gather the necessary data, the researcher adhered to the series of steps and protocols of the University of Mindanao; hence, the researcher secured permission granted by the University of Mindanao Ethics and Review Committee. An official request letter and endorsement from the university research coordinator and University of Mindanao-Professional School dean were secured, respectively. Moreover, the researcher requested permission from the Davao City Schools Division Superintendent and school heads through a formal letter.

After obtaining all the necessary permission, the chosen respondents were provided with an invitation to participate, the validated questionnaires, and the Informed Consent Form. The researcher informed the respondents that observance of confidentiality of their information and responses is strictly adhered to as well as their freedom to withdraw should they feel disinclined to participate in the survey. The distributed questionnaires were successfully collected after completion by the respondents in a two to three-week duration considering that the procedure did not interfere with their official commitment and tasks.

When the data became available, the responses were organized, encoded, and tabulated in an Excel file which the statistician analyzed and evaluated. Descriptive statistics encompassing the mean and standard deviation were utilized to assess the levels of distributed leadership, teacher retention, and work motivation. Moreover, the Pearson product Moment Correlation was employed to ascertain the significant correlation among the variables. Further, the Sobel z-test and medgraph were utilized to examine if work motivation mediates the relationship between distributed leadership and teacher retention. Mediation analysis was also carried out in this study since MacKinnon et al. (2002) cited that this statistical tool is an advanced correlational technique that can be employed to ascertain whether the impact of one variable on another is mediated through a third variable.

To maintain confidentiality, the study adhered to the Data Privacy Act of 2012 where collecting information is refrained. Both the researcher and the respondents were not exposed to any risk in this study as it solely encompassed the teachers' perspectives without diving into personal matters. Also, sources were properly acknowledged through in-text citations following the APA 7th edition referencing, and the researcher committed to maintaining integrity by preventing manipulation and distorting presentations. Moreover, compliance with ethical norms was maintained so the researcher would conduct the study with formality. Further, this study was granted a certificate of approval with UMERC protocol number UMERC-2024-239.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Established in this section are the data and analysis of the results based on the participants' responses on

distributed leadership, teacher retention, and work motivation. The order of presentations is the following: level of distributed leadership, level of teacher retention, level of work motivation, significant relationship between distributed leadership and teacher retention, significant relationship between distributed leadership and work motivation, and significant relationship between work motivation and teacher retention and the mediating effect of work motivation in the relationship between distributed leadership and teacher retention.

Distributed Leadership

Depicted in Table 1 is the level of Distributed Leadership in private schools. The findings manifested a very high level of distributed leadership with an overall mean of 4.41 and a standard deviation of 0.47. This means that distributed leadership is always observed or manifested. It is also revealed that the indicator, school vision, registered the highest mean value of 4.63, outclassing the other indicators. The indicator school organization obtained the lowest mean of 4.20; however, it is still considered very high.

Table 1: Level of Distributed Leadership

Indicators	SD	Mean	Descriptive Level
School Organization	0.62	4.20	Very High
School Vision	0.52	4.63	Very High
School Culture	0.55	4.41	Very High
Instructional Program	0.63	4.36	Very High
Artifacts	0.57	4.35	Very High
Teacher Leadership	0.57	4.39	Very High
Principal Leadership	0.66	4.55	Very High
Overall	0.47	4.41	Very High

As displayed in the results, it can be deduced that a culture of distributed leadership is firmly present across diverse aspects of private schools in Davao City, characterized by shared leadership roles and understanding of the school vision among the teachers. In addition, a very high level of principal leadership among all the indicators of distributed leadership indicated that the respondents underscore the pivotal role of their school principals. School organization was still highly perceived by the teachers. Further, this study suggests that artifacts are vital in supporting shared decision-making since assessment data, feedback forms, and work samples of learners can be utilized to incite collaboration among teachers and administration on instructional improvements; hence, the facilitation of distributed leadership.

This is consistent with the findings of the study by Qadach, Schechter, and Da’as (2020) which stated that a shared vision played an important role in the school principals’ leadership and their capacity to reinforce the strength of distributed leadership in the workplace. Also, Shengnan, and Hallinger (2021) stated that such leadership is stiffened when teachers position themselves as implementers and key participants in the leadership process which nurtures a shared responsibility and ongoing learner development. Moreover, this finding supports the claim that the role of school principals is indispensable in facilitating shared leadership which fosters a favorable outcome in students’ academic achievement (Jambo & Hongde, 2020). Further, the leadership of principals as asserted by Thien and Lee (2023) plays an important role in forming a positive culture that can elevate the well-being of teachers. This is parallel to Maag Merki et al.’s (2022) statement that when a collaborative culture among school leaders and teachers is fostered,

schools tend to have higher levels of teacher motivation and retention since collaborative environments create a shared purpose and sense of belonging in the workforce.

Teacher Retention

Presented in Table 2 is the level of teacher retention in the private schools in Davao City with an overall mean score of 4.34 and a standard deviation of 0.54. The overall level of teacher retention was very high which implied that it was always observed or manifested. Among the indicators, work with students garnered the highest mean score of 4.48 while employment conditions got the lowest at 4.18. The overall very high level could be ascribed to the conducive working environment and school climate established in the private schools as perceived by the teachers. Generally speaking, this positive perception of the teachers across all indicators surmised strong teacher retention in private schools.

Table 2: Level of Teacher Retention

Indicators	SD	Mean	Descriptive Level
Administration and Policy	0.59	4.43	Very High
Work with Students	0.52	4.48	Very High
Resources	0.62	4.28	Very High
Intrinsic Reward of Teaching	0.62	4.32	Very High
Employment Conditions	0.80	4.18	High
Overall	0.54	4.34	Very High

The findings of this study revealed that teachers feel satiated with the support from their school administration which indicated that they feel supported and well-guided. Moreover, the result indicated that the teachers’ relationships and interactions with their students give them fulfillment and satisfaction which suggests that they find their work environment positive and nurturing. This is related to the perspective of O’Shea (2021) that teacher-principal relationships cultivate a significant and positive impact on teacher job satisfaction. In addition, Aldosiry (2022) emphasized that when teachers feel the support from their administrators, they likely prefer to stay at their workplaces than those who do not. The overarching outcome of this study corresponded with previous studies indicating that administrators’ supportive behaviors impact teachers’ productivity in their performance, well-being, and sense of connectedness within the organization (Ertürk, 2021). Seelig and McCabe (2021) also found that teachers’ decision to stay in their schools is influenced by opportunities for leadership and collaboration, connectedness to the community, professional ties, and relationships with their students. As mentioned by Casely-Hayford et al. (2022), to facilitate teacher retention in schools, administrators must cultivate a healthy working environment and social support for teachers.

Work Motivation

Shown in Table 3 is the level of work motivation among the teachers. The teachers showed a high level of work motivation in their workplaces with an overall mean score of 3.96 or high and a standard deviation of 0.45. This indicates that teachers’ work motivation is frequently observed or manifested. The indicator integrated regulation revealed the highest mean score of 4.42 described as very high while amotivation garnered the lowest mean value of 3.96 or moderate.

Table 3: Level of Work Motivation

Indicators	SD	Mean	Descriptive Level
Intrinsic Motivation	0.57	4.39	Very High
Integrated Regulation	0.63	4.42	Very High
Identified regulation	0.68	4.21	Very High
Introjected Regulation	0.88	3.88	High
External Regulation	0.85	3.96	High
Amotivation	0.84	2.92	Moderate
Overall	0.45	3.96	High

The overall result indicates that teachers in private schools have a high level of motivation driven by intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Also, the data manifested that the teachers’ positive responses to work motivation were frequently noted and it suggested a strong internal drive and alignment to personal values among the respondents. Moreover, these delineated that a strong motivational atmosphere in the workplace is experienced by the teachers which is contributed by internal satisfaction and fulfillment from their work. This suggests that the respondents are motivated by the internal satisfaction they get from the success that they achieved and new aspects of learning leading to better work performance. On the other hand, one noteworthy finding was the teachers’ moderate amotivation level. Consequently, the findings of this study denote that the amotivation doesn’t dominate among teachers despite challenging situations and conditions in their workplace. This is shown in the consistency of their responses evidenced by the low standard deviation value.

This finding is consistent with the previous study which stated that increased job performance is driven by a strengthened intrinsic motivation (Fauzan, Mariyah & Setiaji, 2021). In addition, according to Kilag et al. (2023), intrinsic factors influence teacher performance which results to engagement and commitment, thereby influencing teacher performance. Consequently, the result denotes that teachers perceive their jobs as indispensable not only as a task to them but also as a reflection of their identity and personal values which further contributes to their aspirations and decision-making in their career paths. Similarly, the result reveals that the teachers are inspired to engage in their tasks due to external validation, external rewards and recognition aside from the enjoyment of the work itself. This is akin to the findings of Mutesasira and Marongwe (2024) who posited that the sources of motivation to improve the wellness and performance of teachers include recognition of their performance and working hard; hence, enhanced employee efficiency and efficacy (Vo, Tuliao & Chen, 2022).

Relationship between Distributed Leadership and Teacher Retention

Table 4 points out the relationship between distributed leadership and teacher retention in private schools. It is evident that the overall result revealed a positive relationship with an R-value of .842 with a probability of $p < 0.000$, which is significant at a 0.05 level. This reveals that distributed leadership predicts teacher retention in private school settings. Consequently, the hypothesis stating that there is no significant relationship between distributed leadership and teacher retention is rejected.

Table 4: Significance of the Relationship between Distributed Leadership and Teacher Retention in Private Schools

Distributed Leadership	Teacher Retention					
	Administration and Policy	Work with Students	Resources	Intrinsic Reward of Teaching	Employment Conditions	Overall
School Organization	.624** .000	.491** .000	.628** .000	.649** .000	.617** .000	.711** .000
School Vision	.568** .000	.508** .000	.442** .000	.529** .000	.474** .000	.589** .000
School Culture	.700** .000	.524** .000	.607** .000	.667** .000	.634** .000	.739** .000
Instructional Program	.637** .000	.558** .000	.626** .000	.617** .000	.589** .000	.711** .000
Artifacts	.651** .000	.496** .000	.603** .000	.611** .000	.576** .000	.692** .000
Teacher Leadership	.615** .000	.536** .000	.604** .000	.672** .000	.597** .000	.712** .000
Principal Leadership	.643** .000	.404** .000	.428** .000	.520** .000	.462** .000	.576** .000
Overall	.791** .000	.624** .000	.702** .000	.759** .000	.703** .000	.842** .000

The results reveal a significant correlation between distributed leadership and teacher retention. Moreover, teachers’ engagement and collaboration stemmed from a supportive school culture and interpersonal trust brought about by distributed leadership. Sharing of decision-making responsibility as an empowerment of teachers through distributed leadership was found to promote positive change within schools. Under these circumstances, teachers remain in private schools because they perceive strong support from the administration, a positive working environment, and strong collaboration with other stakeholders. The interplay between distributed leadership and teacher retention harnesses the rapport between leaders and subordinates.

Consequently, the results were consistent with those of earlier studies. For instance, it is similar to the claims of Liu, Qiang & Kang (2023) citing that utilizing distributed leadership by giving the decision-making responsibility to the teachers may enhance a positive school culture. Additionally, academic achievement among students and retention of teachers increased upon the implementation of a shared leadership approach (Urlick, 2020). Sulit (2020) claimed that distributed leadership practices contribute to an enhanced sense of connectedness among teachers; hence the mitigation of teacher attrition. Likewise, the result supports the studies of Liu et al., (2021) stating that distributed leadership enhances organizational support, teacher efficacy, and job satisfaction leading to higher retention outcomes. This is parallel to the study of Bukhari et al. (2023) which indicated that school administrators may utilize strategies that will abet the needs and expectations of teachers. As a result, a more seamless and relaxed attainment of goals is met when information and leadership sharing take place in particular (Suntani et al.,2021).

Relationship between Distributed Leadership and Motivation

Table 5 analyzes the relationship between distributed leadership and motivation. All the indicators of distributed leadership were correlated with all indicators of motivation. The overall result showed a positive relationship with an R-value of .519 with a p-value of 0.000, which is lower than the 0.05 level of significance. This result indicates that there is a significant relationship between distributed leadership and the motivation of teachers. Thus, the hypothesis of no significant relationship between distributed leadership and work motivation was rejected.

Table 5 Significance of the Relationship between Distributed Leadership and Motivation

Distributed Leadership	Motivation						
	Intrinsic Motivation	Integrated Regulation	Identified regulation	Introjected Regulation	External Regulation	Amotivation	Overall
School Organization	.427** .000	.406** .000	.413** .000	.368** .000	.409** .000	-.067 .230	.519** .000
School Vision	.396** .000	.339** .000	.332** .000	.237** .000	.271** .000	-.092 .102	.381** .000
School Culture	.374** .000	.410** .000	.378** .000	.248** .000	.321** .000	-.066 .240	.432** .000
Instructional Program	.450** .000	.470** .000	.397** .000	.279** .000	.324** .000	-.108 .053	.466** .000
Artifacts	.446** .000	.402** .000	.336** .000	.225** .000	.356** .000	-.067 .233	.439** .000
Distributed Leadership							
Teacher Leadership	.400** .000	.317** .000	.336** .000	.229** .000	.279** .000	-.090 .108	.378** .000
Principal Leadership	.248** .000	.265** .000	.225** .000	.192** .001	.292** .000	-.085 .131	.300** .000
Overall	.486** .000	.464** .000	.430** .000	.318** .000	.402** .000	-.103 .066	.519** .000

Based on the gleaned results, school organization had a highly significant positive correlation among all indicators of distributed leadership with an overall r-value of .519 and a p-value of .000. The overall results of school vision (r=.381, p=.000), school culture (r=.432, p=.000), instructional program (r=.466, p=.000), artifacts (r=.439, p=.000), teacher leadership (r=.378, p=.000), and principal leadership (r=.300, p=.000)

showed significant positive correlation with work motivation. The results suggested that employees remain motivated at work when they perceive a supported culture in their workplace. Thus, when the working environment is favorable and the employees experience a beneficial exchange through rewards, they reciprocate by sustaining an increased level of productivity. While amotivation was revealed to have a negative relationship with all the indicators of distributed leadership, with an *r*-value of $-.103$, the relationship is highly insignificant with a *p*-value of $.066$. This indicates that amotivation is not felt among the teachers while distributed leadership is employed in private schools.

Accordingly, distributed leadership positively and significantly relates to the work motivation of teachers. The findings of the study correlate with the assertions of Xin and Tahir (2024) whose study indicated that distributed leadership styles curate job satisfaction leading to motivation. With distributed leadership where trust in the working team by the principal reciprocates teachers' trust in the principal, trust in the organization and well-being are nurtured (Liu et al., 2024); therefore, work motivation is sustained. Moreover, this type of leadership also enhances teacher efficacy since support and trust are manifested in their workplace Cai et al., (2023). Thus, when workers perceive support from the organization, their sense of belonging to the organization is strengthened. (Berkovich and Hassan, 2023) stressed that a shared sense of leadership and responsibilities as well as a collective effort among teachers mobilized by distributed leadership magnifies teachers' motivation. Also, Quek et al., (2021) noted that distributed leadership was found to be a factor that enhances the empowerment and engagement of employees which leads to job satisfaction, stronger organizational commitment, and reduced turnover intention.

Relationship between Work Motivation and Teacher Retention

Reflected in Table 6 is the statistically positive correlation between work motivation and teacher retention. The overall result unveiled a positive relationship with an *r*-value of $.564$ and a *p*-value of <0.05 which signifies that the relationship between the two variables is significant. This implies that teacher retention increases when the teachers are motivated. Hence, the hypothesis claiming that there is no significant relationship between work motivation and retention is rejected.

The correlation that existed between motivation and teacher retention revealed a significant relationship. In the same way, motivation can be measured on the teachers' perceptions relating to the factors that foster a conducive work environment. This means that private school teachers employed motivational factors in their workplace as a mediating tool to intensify their retention intentions. Similarly, the results suggested that factors like positive working conditions and the promotion of well-being among teachers that include recognition, incentives, and positive relationships influence their job satisfaction leading to teacher retention.

Table 6 Significance of the Relationship between Motivation and Teacher Retention

Motivation	Teacher Retention					Overall
	Administration and Policy	Work with Students	Resources	Intrinsic Reward of Teaching	Employment Conditions	
Intrinsic Motivation	.419** .000	.437** .000	.469** .000	.477** .000	.410** .000	.517** .000
Integrated Regulation	.415** .000	.454** .000	.464** .000	.491** .000	.459** .000	.536** .000

Identified regulation	.332** .000	.392** .000	.416** .000	.421** .000	.378** .000	.455** .000
Introjected Regulation	.271** .000	.264** .000	.280** .000	.336** .000	.352** .000	.358** .000
External Regulation	.392** .000	.252** .000	.325** .000	.308** .000	.331** .000	.379** .000
Amotivation	-.067 .236	-.103 .067	-.055 .325	-.028 .618	-.068 .226	-.074 .187
Overall	.461** .000	.431** .000	.490** .000	.521** .000	.489** .000	.564** .000

The study’s insights are concurrent with the study of Mutesasira and Marongwe (2024); Nargotra and Sarangal (2023) which stated that when teachers’ good performance in all aspects is acknowledged and school leaders create an environment of support in their institutions where teachers are engaged hence, showing a profound desire to stay with their organization. Additionally, the paramount factors in making employees stay in their jobs are an elated work atmosphere, a just and efficient leadership, and opportunities for professional growth (Alkaabi et al., 2024). This was confirmed by Katzer (2023) in his findings that the reasons why teachers leave their schools encompass a lack of support and appreciation from the administration and a lack of teacher's voice in decision-making. Thus, when teachers are embedded in their work due to a positive work environment, they increase their performance efficiency and dispel the idea of quitting their teaching positions.

Mediating Analysis of the Three Variables

The data was subjected to a linear regression analysis, after which it was submitted to the medgraph. Table 7 presents the steps marked as Steps 1 to 4. As specified, distributed leadership significantly predicts teacher retention among private school teachers with a standardized coefficient of .842 and p-value of less than 0.001 as unveiled in Step 1. This signifies that higher levels of distributed leadership are connected to higher teacher retention.

Table 7 Regression analysis showing the influence of distributed leadership on teacher retention as mediated by work motivation

Step	Path	B	S.E.	β
1	c	.960	.035	.842***
2	a	.493	.046	.519*
3	b	.208	.041	.173***
4	c'	.857	.039	.752***

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p = 0.000$

In Step 2, distributed leadership exhibited a significant direct effect towards work motivation ($\beta = .519$; $p < 0.05$). Meanwhile, Step 3 shows the analysis result, which suggests that work motivation significantly predicts retention among private school teachers in Davao City with a standardized coefficient of .173 with a p-value of less than .001.

Since paths a, b, and c are found to be significant, further mediation analysis established by Baron and Kenny (1986) using a medgraph was considered to ascertain the significance of the mediation effect of work motivation on teacher retention utilizing the Sobel z test. If the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable flunks to be statistically significant by the end of the analysis, full mediation will be attained. It signifies that the mediator variable mediates all the effects. On the other hand, only partial mediation is attained, when the regression coefficient is significantly curtailed during the final step but remains significant. This suggests that a part of distributed leadership is mediated by work motivation. Other components; however, are either directly or indirectly influenced by factors outside the paradigm. Further, as seen in step 4 (denoted as c’), the effect of distributed leadership on teacher retention is slightly reduced after being mediated by work motivation. With this, partial mediation transpired as the effect was found to be significant at $p < 0.05$. Hence, the null hypothesis asserting that work motivation has no significant mediating effect on the relationship between distributed leadership and teacher retention was rejected.

These findings are anchored on the claim of Quek (2021) that distributed leadership has a significant effect on teacher retention since it increases employee engagement and job satisfaction. When school leaders empower the teachers to participate in decision-making and carry out constant monitoring of the teachers’ practices and performances, the teachers become more committed. Ahrari et al., (2021) highlighted that teachers’ self-efficacy is enhanced by shared decision-making and teachers’ empowerment, two of the features of distributed leadership that also escalate job satisfaction.

These findings are also grounded on the evidence provided in the study of Casely-Hayford et al., (2022) which showed that work motivation is a factor that explains the teachers’ intention to remain in their profession. The experience of teachers in their workplace is fundamental in enhancing their job satisfaction and performance. So, when teachers experience motivational factors in the workplace such as increased benefits, a positive organizational climate, and continuous professional learning, higher turnover rates are lowered (Aulia & Haerani, 2022).

Table 8 shows the result of the computation of the mediating effect, Sobel z-value of 4.59 with a p-value less than 0.05 both of which are significant. This suggests that the mediating effect is partial since the original direct effect of distributed leadership on teacher retention was reduced upon the presence of work motivation. The positive value of Sobel z implies that the addition of work motivation decreases the effect of distributed leadership on teacher retention.

Table 8 Statistical analysis on the presence (or absence) of mediating effect

Combination of Variables	Sobel z	p-value	Mediation
<i>distributed leadership</i> → work motivation → <i>teacher retention</i>	4.597442	<0.05	Partial mediation

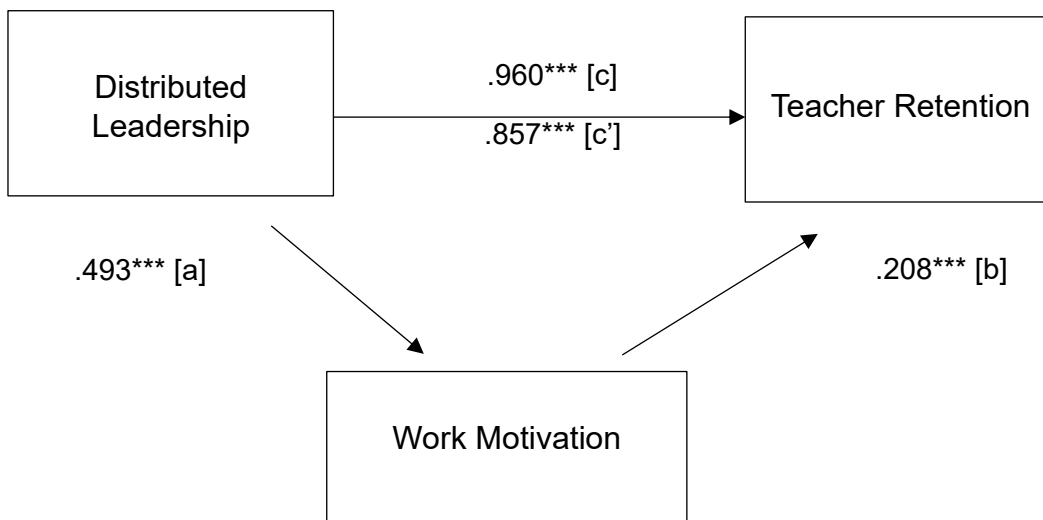
* $p < 0.05$

Moreover, Figure 2 shows the computed effect size for the mediation among the three variables. The extent of the effect of distributed leadership on teacher retention associated with the indirect path is determined by the effect size. The total effect value of 0.960 is the beta of distributed leadership toward teacher retention. The direct effect value of 0.857 is the beta of distributed leadership toward teacher retention with the inclusion of work motivation in the regression. The indirect effect value of 0.493 is acquired from

the original beta between distributed leadership that now flows through work motivation to teacher retention ($a \cdot b$, where “a” represents the path DL → WM and “b” refers to the path between WM → TR). In getting the ratio index, the indirect effect divides the total effect; as such 0.493 by 0.960 is equal to 0.5135. It depicts that roughly 51.35 percent of the total impact of distributed leadership on teacher retention goes through work motivation and around 48.65 percent of the overall effect is either direct or mediated by other variables that are excluded in the paradigm.

This study aims to contribute to the literature relative to the viable mediating variable on the relationship between distributed leadership and teacher retention. Particularly, being investigated as a possible mediating variable was work motivation which may explain the impact of distributed leadership on teacher retention. Partial mediation is revealed in the study and the significant effect of motivation may mitigate teacher retention concerns and intensify the utilization of shared decision-making between school heads and teachers. These are relevant to the study of Cai, Liu, et al. (2023) wherein teachers’ engagement and collaboration stemmed from a supportive work climate and interpersonal trust brought about by distributed leadership and motivation may alleviate retention intentions.

Figure 2. Medgraph showing the variables of the study



Mediation Analysis

Sobel z 4.597442, >0.05*
 Percentage of the total effect that is mediated 10.687083%
 Ratio of the indirect to direct effect .119659

Effect Size Measures

Unstandardized Coefficients
 Total: 0.960
 Direct: 0.857
 Indirect: 0.493
 Ratio Index: 0.5135

The recognized findings of this study indicated that distributed leadership positively influences work motivation. This demonstrates that when distributed leadership is employed in the workplace such that

responsibilities and tasks are shared, they feel that their skills and contributions are valued. This resonates with the study of Ucar (2021) which revealed that distributed leadership practices foster a supportive environment by enabling teachers to share leadership roles and responsibilities, engage in collaboration, and work within teams which positively influences teachers' organizational commitment. This is on an equal footing with the findings of the study of Liu, Bellibaş, and Gümüş (2021) and Nargotra and Sarangal (2023) where distributed leadership is positively correlated to teacher engagement and job satisfaction. Additionally, teachers who experience a trusting relationship with school administrators express satisfaction and speak positively of their workplace (Seelig & McCabe, 2021). This implies that as a way of reciprocating, teachers show retention intention when they feel valued, respected, and engaged as a result of a nurturing workplace.

These findings were established in the study of Sumipo (2020) where motivational factors like feeling a sense of fulfillment become the strongest influences on teachers' decision to stay in their workplace. Moreover, this fulfillment comes from the benefits of teachers being increased, a positive school climate being maintained, and teachers' personal needs being met which resulted in lower teacher turnover rates; hence, favorable educational outcomes are being improved (Aulia & Haerani, 2022). In the same way, a significant effect of distributed leadership on work motivation suggests that when responsibilities and tasks are shared making the teachers leaders aside from their usual teaching routine, teachers feel valued and motivated. Also, Zhou et al., (2021) in their study stressed that job satisfaction is fostered by distributed leadership which ultimately leads to improved employee productivity. Teachers regard shared leadership as an avenue for them to become a voice in decision-making apart from the usual instruction delivery in the classrooms and a driving force to show exemplary performance (Tarraya, 2023).

Lastly, work motivation showed a significant mediating effect in the relationship between distributed leadership and teacher retention. This indicates that a partial mediation was attained which means that the influence of distributed leadership on teacher retention is not reduced but strengthened to a slight extent with the inclusion of work motivation. This is parallel to the idea that teachers' retention decision is influenced by the implementation of distributed leadership practices which can build trust and a feeling of being valued (Kavgacı & Öztürk, 2023), encouraging a conducive work atmosphere Alkaabi et al., (2024) and fostering a positive organizational culture and improved work environment (Aulia & Haerani, 2022).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Given the analyzed results, this section presents the conclusion and offers recommendations. The respondents, the Basic Education teachers in the private schools of Davao City, perceived very high levels of distributed leadership and teacher retention and a high level of work motivation. The findings underline the pivotal role of distributed leadership in elevating teacher retention and work motivation in private schools.

Moreover, the results also support a significant relationship between distributed leadership and teacher retention. The positive correlation of distributed leadership to teacher retention in terms of school culture accentuates teachers' commitment which is instrumental in ensuring the success of the teaching process. Similarly, a strong link is found between distributed leadership and work motivation. Further, the study implies that work motivation partially mediates the relationship between distributed leadership and teacher retention. In light of this, work motivation is vital in mediating the relationship between distributed leadership and teacher retention.

The findings of the study align with Homans and Blau's (1958:1964) Social Exchange Theory wherein a

favorable work environment and an experience of a mutually beneficial exchange as shown by a strong alignment between their values and internal rewards make the teachers reciprocate by embracing a positive attitude and maintaining a high level of work engagement and productivity. Moreover, the findings are corroborated by Mitchell et al., (2001) Job Embeddedness Theory which avers that employees are influenced to anchor to their job and dispel the idea of quitting their teaching positions when they experience a strong bond with it because of a positive work environment. Further, this study is validated by Rhoades & Eisenberger's (2002) Perceived Organizational Support Theory in which teachers will exhibit a positive attitude toward their professional tasks and manifest a robust sense of loyalty to the schools when they feel that their contributions and well-being are valued.

Since school organization though perceived as very high obtained the lowest mean value, it is crucial that daily and weekly schedules of teachers may include regular collaboration time to ensure that they can discuss strategies and share best practices to address learners' needs. This can be intensified through professional learning communities. Specific time for leadership responsibilities may be integrated into the teachers' schedules so they can manage their duties well. Also, school principals may consider providing opportunities for adequate and comprehensive academic preparations before the kick-off of the academic year to help teachers achieve enhanced instructional readiness and competence. Moreover, sufficient resources like instructional materials, professional growth opportunities, and mentorship by senior teachers among new teachers may be empowered.

Even if employment conditions may reflect an optimistic perception among the teachers, it is essential that this may be enriched by elevating basic salary and other incentives, engaging the teachers in diverse professional growth pathways, and assigning workloads to teachers where they still have ample time to perform other academic duties beyond instruction delivery. Albeit, work motivation has a partial mediating effect, it still has an impactful role in connecting distributed leadership and teacher retention. Amotivation was perceived as moderate and obtained the lowest mean score; however, the result suggested that occasionally, the teachers endure disengagement.

Relative to this, school leaders may cultivate a culture of motivation in their workplace like aligning with teachers' capabilities and qualifications. Teachers' desire to remain in their role elevates when they are empowered and given utmost importance as a stronghold of frontliners. Hence, school principals may consider providing a conducive work environment where pathways for professional development are unclouded and underscoring the recognition of teachers' exemplary performance and contributions to attaining the school objectives leading to the fulfillment of the school vision and mission. Moreover, to increase teachers' motivation and job satisfaction, school leaders may promote open dialogue and consultation, creating an environment where teachers feel capable and valued; hence, disengagement is reduced.

Lastly, this study may be replicated through a mixed-method approach to enhance the interpretation of teachers' perceptions of distributed leadership, work motivation, and teacher retention. Moreover, each district of Davao City may be well-represented in terms of identifying study respondents. Teachers may also be categorized in terms of the number of years of teaching in their current school. Finally, future research aimed at crafting intervention programs and policies is vital to determine possible factors that can amplify distributed leadership practices and work motivation to boost retention intentions among private school teachers.

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