Examining the effect of school administrators' leadership skills on employees' work engagement

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ABSTRACT

The study wanted to determine the correlation between the exercise of leadership skills of administrators of Divine Word Colleges in the Ilocos Region and the work engagement of employees. To support the study, related literature was reviewed to establish the theoretical foundation of the study. The study used a descriptive assessment and correlational research design. To gather the data, the validated questionnaires were used, and weighted mean and Pearson r or Product-Moment Correlation were used to interpret the data. Weighted mean was used to determine the level of leadership skills of administrators and Pearson r was used to determine the correlation between leadership skill and work engagement of employees. The study found that there is a correlation between leadership skill and work engagement of employees and therefore the hypothesis of the study is accepted.

Introduction

Business development and performance are reflections of leadership. If there is anyone to be blamed or praised in any organization if something goes wrong or right is leadership. The last person to hold accountability is leadership. He/she cannot avoid any blame for what is happening. Fredberg (2011) said that a good leader passes the credit and take the blame. In reverse, Fredberg may say the same thing that a bad leader take the credit and pass the blame on others. These statements reflect the crucial role of leadership in any business or organization. From our perspective when we stand as outsiders and making a judgment on a certain organization, our mind goes first to its leadership. People ask first who is on its leadership.

The problem of bankruptcy or low-quality output cannot be blamed on employees but first of all, is the leader because it is a reflection of management and leadership problem. Leadership skills, leadership values are all affecting how the business or the organization is operating and affecting its performance and quality. Therefore, leadership positions cannot be just assigned to anyone but only to those who have the right skills, experience, and values to manage and to lead. Leading and managing a business is not the same as managing a political party which may not be demanding skills, experience, and values.

One cannot deny the role of the influence of leadership skills and organizational performance. Studies have shown that organizational performance and development has something to do with leadership. Danisman et al. (2015) were able to collect 598 studies on the effect of leadership on organizational performance. Based on their review of the result of those studies found that leadership has a medium level effect on organizational performance. Organizational performance is determined by the attainment of organizational goals or objectives. Bass (1985) argued that the attainment of the organizational objectives depending on leadership behavior. Madanchian et al. (2017) argued that effective leadership is important and affects organizational performance or outcome.

Organizational performance cannot be achieved by the leadership alone but by the organization members as a whole, in this case, its workforce. The performance of the organization is the output of the performance of the employees. But this performance is the product of engaged employees. When employees are engaging in their work, the organization can achieve its goals. However, performance and work engagement are the result of leadership behavior as pointed out by Bass (1985).

Though there have been studies in line with leadership skills and organizational performance, there are few studies yet on the leadership skills and work engagement of employees. This study is a follow up of my previous and similar study. My previous study measures work engagement as a dual construct but the current research argues that organizational performance is different from work engagement because work engagement involves cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions. It is a multidimensional construct. This is the reason why we go into this study, to examine the leadership skills of all heads of Divine Word Colleges in the Ilocos Region and the work engagement of employees. This is one way of looking into the reason why the schools have not achieved their highest performance as measured by the result of licensure exams. Work engagement or teaching engagement can be the culprit.

The output of this study will inform the management or administrators of the schools to know the effect of their leadership skills and call them to review their leadership skills and improve. Leadership skills of administrators matter to the improvement of the employees' performance. The study of Abbas and Yaqoob (2009) proved this point that leadership development such as coaching, training, and development, empowerment, participation, and delegation contribute 50% of employees' performance**.** It is expected then that the management takes seriously the recommendation of the study to improve their leadership skills to improve the work engagement of employees.

The study is divided into five parts. The first part is the introduction in which the paper discusses the rationale of the study and the purpose of the study. The second part is the review of related literature and the theories of the study. The third part is the research methodology that discusses the research design, population of the study, the locale of the study, research instruments, data gathering procedures, and statistical treatment of data. The fourth part is empirical data and analysis which discusses and analyze the finding of the study based on the statement of the problems. The fifth is the result and discussion which discusses the result of the study and followed by implication and conclusion.

Literature Review

In this part, the paper discusses the pieces of literature and studies that discuss the theories of the study. The theories that are being discussed are related to the variables of the study to be investigated. These include the concept of leadership, the difference between leadership and management, leadership skills, and work engagement.

Theoretical and Conceptual Background of the Study

The Definition of Leadership

Topics about leadership are nothing new to many people and people have been talking about it every day. However, though people are talking about it it does not mean that they understand what leadership is. Bennis and Nanus (2007) recognized that there are so many definitions and different concepts about leadership, particularly who a leader is and whom they lead. Different definitions and understandings of leadership result from different empirical studies about leadership from different researchers. Despite those studies but still no common agreement about what distinguishes effective leaders from ineffective leaders and effective organization from the ineffective organization. Instead of giving a straight definition of leadership, Bennies and Nanus (2007) identify who a leader is. According to them, leadership is about character and beyond character, a leader is someone who brings change, has a strong determination to achieve the goals, can generate and sustain trust, can inspire optimism, and is willing to execute to achieve the objectives. This concept of leadership is a follow-through of Bennis' (1959) previous concept about leadership. Bennis (1959) defines leadership as the process by which an agent influences a follower to change his/her behavior in the desired manner. This is similar to the definition given by Rauch and Behling (1984) that leadership is about influence over an organized group to achieve the objectives. Bass (1985) also contributes to the concept of leadership. For him, leadership is also a process of transforming followers into a desired manner to achieve the goals and creating a vision to be attained, and articulate the vision and the ways how to achieve the vision.

Though the above definitions are offered by different authors they have similarities because they stand on the common understanding about leadership, that leadership is about the vision, articulating the vision to the followers, and transforming followers. Based on these concepts of leadership, we get three fundamental principles of leadership: follower, influence, and vision. Leadership is not in a vacuum but it has followers and exercises his influence over his/her followers to achieve the vision.

Leadership and management

Leadership and management are two different things but the difference is based on its function. A leader's function is different from a manager's function but both are held by one person. In other words, a leader can act as a manager and a leader at the same by exercising his/her function as a leader and manager (Abun, 2018). Though some say that leadership and management cannot occur in one person because both are qualitatively different and mutually exclusive (Yukl, 2006). But one cannot also imagine that there is a position for a leader and there is a position for management (Abun, 2018). In reality, both are held by one person who is in the

position and exercises two functions. A leader should understand or a manager should understand that he/she is exercising both functions.

Bennis and Nanus (1985) identified several differences between leader and manager. According to them, on one hand, a leader is the one who "does the right thing, sees people as great assets, focuses on outcome, asks what and why things can be done, shares information, promotes network, and seeks commitment. At the other hand, a manager is the one who does thing right, see people as liabilities, seeks control, creates and follows the rules, focuses on how things should be done, seeks compliance, values secrecy and uses formal authority". Also Bass and Yammarino (1990), Hickman (1990), Kotter (1988), Rost (1991) have explained the difference between a leader and a manager. Based on their investigation, they came to conclude that a manager values stability, order, and efficiency, while a leader value flexibility, innovation, and adaptation. A Manager is concerned about how things are to be done and create some rules to regulate the behavior of people to get things done. However, a leader is concerned with what things mean to people, and try to influence people to agree about the most important things to be done. They have also argued that though these functions are different but they are handled by one person (Bass & Yammarino, 1990). Kotter (1990) further argued that another differentiated aspect of leadership and management is their core processes and intended outcomes. Management seeks to produce predictability and order by setting goals and plans and strategies with the time frame and allotting resources to accomplish the goals. Leadership focuses on change and therefore the leader creates a vision for the future. He likewise communicates the vision to the followers, then motivates and inspires them to achieve and realize the vision.

Leadership Skills

Based on the concept of leadership as given by Ginnett et al. (1999) the leader's job is to provide an environment where a team can be effective, consequently a leader should have a certain level of skills to carry out his functions. The leadership skills that we are discussing in this paper are based on what Ginnett et al. (1999) presented in his book on Leadership. Ginnett et al. (1999) call these skills advanced leadership skills. These skills are communication, planning, organizing, problem-solving, developing people, motivation and delegation, and empowerment.

Communication

Communication is a very important instrument to hold the group or the organization together. It is a chief means by which people relate to one another, hence, it is needed that the leader relates and explains the vision, mission, objectives, and policies. Thus communication is the essence of community life. Therefore, everyone needs to learn how to communicate well and effectively. However, the demand for a leader is more than ordinary communication because success can depend on how well he/she communicates with his/her employees. Luthra and Dahiya (2015) argued that an effective leader is all about communicating effectively and even considered to be imperative skills to have. Klimoski and Hayness (1980) pointed out that effective communication skills are important because it allows both the leader and employees greater access to information relevant to organizational decisions. According to Bass (1990) as cited by Ginnett et al. (1999), effective communication is determined by the degree to which the message is understood by the listener or the receiver. However, communication is not only verbal communication but it is also non-verbal communication. Therefore, according to Bass, a good leader must be able to communicate his feelings and ideas effectively and be able to articulate arguments, advocate positions to persuade others. According to the study of Klimoski and Hayness (1980) that communication correlates with job satisfaction, productivity, and quality of work outputs.

Planning and organizing

There is no management and leadership without planning and organizing. One cannot lead without direction on where to go and what to be done to get there. One can lead and managed based on what he/she had planned (Abun, 2018). The first job of a leader is to exercise his/her managerial function which is to plan or to determine the strategic direction of the business. Vision, mission, objectives, key result areas, performance indicators, and strategies to execute the plan must be clear and that the leader sees to it that he/she communicates these plans to employees. The question of what to plan is depending on the needs of the business or the organization. Peterson and Hicks (1995) argued that development planning is to identify development needs. There can be a lot of needs but there are priorities to be identified and to be planned. While organizing is concerned with assigning a task with its clear job description, grouping task into departments, and allocating resources to departments (Santos, 1999).

Problem Solving

According to Abun (2018) of the of the determining factors to be a successful leader-manager is his/her skills in problem-solving. This skill is demanded by a leader more than the employees because all problems will go to the leader when the employees cannot do it. This is a demanding skill because organizations cannot go away from different natures of problems. Therefore a leader-manager should know the methods and procedures on how to solve problems that he/she encounters in the organization. According to Ginnet and Hughes (1999), the first step in solving problems is to identify the problem. Identifying the problems cannot be done by a leader-manager alone but it needs employees' participation so that they can contribute ideas and determine the problem. Brainstorming and group discussion may be needed. After identifying the problems, then define the problem about the nature of the problem. Only after defining the problem, then one can move into finding out the root cause of the problem and develop alternative solutions. There can be a lot of alternative solutions, therefore, the group should analyze the pros and cons of each solution and take the one that brings greater benefits for the organization. Implementation is crucial to the solution and thus management must monitor the implementation

if it goes according to the plan and answer the problem. It is advised that the continuing impact must be assessed to measure whether the solution is answering the main problem or not.

Developing People

Organization nowadays faces tough competition and the only people to face this competition is employees. Technologies are changing and therefore the ways on how things are done are also changing. The only way to cope up with the new development is always to update employees to the new skills according to the current demand. Developing people is not a cost but it is an investment that needs to be prioritized. People's development depends on the needs of the organization. Based on the analysis of the needs, the leader can determine what needs to be updated and who is to be developed.

People's development is not limited to knowledge and skills only. It also includes developing employees to be leaders. McGregor Burns as developed by Bass (1985) introduced the theory of transformational leadership. One of the concerns of transformational leadership is people's transformation, not only in terms of skills and knowledge but also to transform employees into future leaders. Bass contended that the success of a leader is not measured by in terms of profit and advancement of an organization but how many people or employees he/she has developed to be leaders like them. Maxwell (1995) made it clear that the job of a leader is to develop leaders around leaders. He pointed out that the challenge of a leader is to raise potential leaders, nursing potential leaders, equipping potential leaders, developing potential leaders, forming a dream team of leaders, and producing a generation of leaders.

Motivating people

Motivation is very important for leadership that has to be taken seriously. Why is it to be taken seriously? It is the only way to energize people to work to achieve organizational goals. Unmotivated employees will disengage from their work and it can affect productivity, quality, and organizational performance. Therefore, a leader must learn how to motivate his/her employees. Employees have different needs and aspirations to be fulfilled. It is the job of a leader to identify different needs that motivate employees to work (Abun, 2018). Thus motivation cannot be generalized because all people/employees do not have the same needs (Ginnet, Hughes & Curphy, 1999). Motivating employees may follow the formula given by Maslow (1943) with five basic categories of needs such as physiological needs, safety needs, belongingness and love needs, social needs or esteem, and self-actualization. Or a leader can follow the ERG theory of Alderfer (1969) as a simplification of Maslow's hierarchical needs such as existence, relatedness, and growth needs. Besides motivating people through their basic needs, a leader may motivate their employees by appreciating their works particularly those who deserve it. Recognition through praise can boost their morale and motivate them to work better.

Delegation and Empowerment

Delegation and empowerment are two different terms and with different meanings but they are related. Delegation of authority is a way of the leader sharing power with a lower level of management. In this case, a leader allows subordinates to act on his/her behalf. While empowerment is a technique used by the leader to allow employees to take control of their own lives or take an active role in the change process (Zimmerman, 2000). However, the two terms are interrelated. A delegation is also a form of empowerment in which a leader shared his/her power to the lower level of management or employees for them to make decisions on behalf of the manager or leadership and to control their work and life. Foronda (2010) argued that empowerment is about delegation and accountability, a top-down process where senior leaders articulate vision and objectives and hold employees for achieving them. Therefore, for empowerment to work, a leader must delegate their power to the subordinates to make decisions on their behalf because they are the closest to the problems and have more knowledge about the problems and they can make the best decisions. Then the leader must also provide the necessary resources needed to carry out their duties and to make decisions.

Work Engagement: A multidimensional Construct

Making employees happy in the workplace will not necessarily lead them to engage in their work. They may seem to be happy but it does not mean that they are engaging in their work. Thus, Abun (2018) argued that perfect attendance does not mean that the employees engage in their work. They may show up and looked contented in their work but it does not tell if the employee is engaging in his/her work. Work engagement is a multidimensional construct that includes tangible and intangible aspects or dimensions. Kuok & Taormina, (2017) pointed out that work engagement is about the connection between employees and the work. The connection may include cognitive, physical, and psychological connections of the person into the work. When the person is engaging in his/her work, it means that the person engages with his knowledge (cognitive), his physical presence in the work, and with his emotion toward the work. In other words, these employees are absorbed by their work which is shown by their willingness to dedicate their time and themselves to the work and always exerting effort to come out with the best output or performance (Bakker & Leiter, 2010). Abun (2018) contended that an engaged employee loves their work and have an emotional attachment to the work. They are often identified with their work and always take positive views and actions that improve the image of the organization.

Following the above concept, one may argue that measuring work engagement is not a single construct or measuring its physical dimension only but it is a multidimensional construct that includes cognitive, physical, and emotional dimensions. There have been conflicting views along this line. On one side, a certain group argues that work engagement is a single construct that measures physical engagement only particularly physical presence in the workplace (Maslach & Leiter, 1997 as cited by Kuok & Taormina, 2017). On the other side, another group argues that it is multidimensional constructs that measure its cognitive, physical, and

emotional dimension (Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonzalez-Roma & Bakker, 2002). Recent development follows the second argument in studying work engagement. In other words, when one measures work engagement, one has to measure the three-dimension such as cognitive, affective, and conative dimensions. Assessment should include how much a person knows about his work (cognitive), how often he/she is absent in his work (conative), and how he/she feels about his/her work (affective).

The current study would like to investigate work engagement as a multidimensional construct. The researcher believes that it is not enough to measure work engagement in one dimension only such as physical presence in the workplace or emotional dimension. Work engagement is about the whole person which is physical and mental dimension. The current study is an improvement of my previous studies in which I measured work engagement as a dual construct, from the physical and emotional dimension only (Abun et al., 2017). The researcher believes that measuring work engagement from two dimensions will not provide a complete picture of work engagement.

Conceptual Framework

Independent variables   *Dependent Variables*

Leadership Skills:
- Communication
- Planning and Organizing
- Problem-solving
- Developing people
- Motivating people
- Delegation and empowerment

Work Engagement:

-Cognitive Engagement

- Physical Engagement

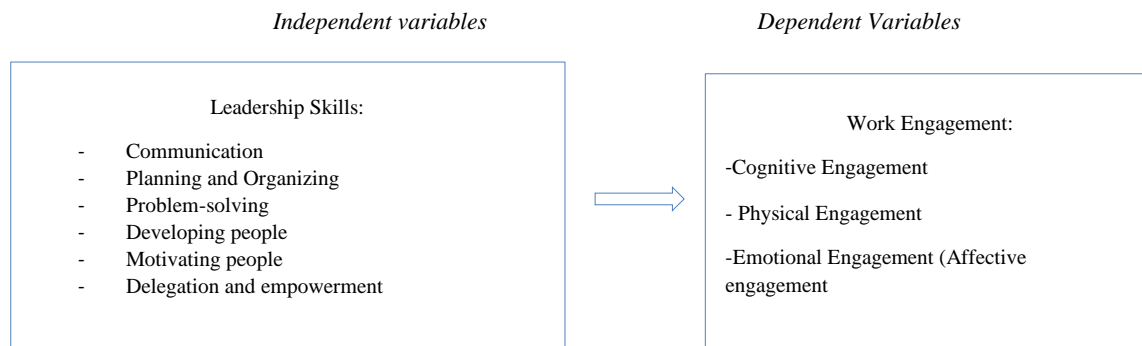-Emotional Engagement (Affective engagement

Figure 1: The conceptual framework reflects the independent and dependent variables; *Source:* Foronda, 2010; Kuok and Taormina, 2017; Abun, 2017.

Independent variables are variables that stand alone and cannot be changed by other variables that one tries to measure. Dependent variables are variables that depend on the independent variables. Any change or movement in the independent variable can change the dependent variables (USC, n.d). In this study, the independent variable is leadership skills and the dependent variable is work engagement. The framework shows that change in leadership skills can change in work engagement.

Statement of the Problems

The study plans to investigate the influence of leadership skills toward work engagement of employees of Divine Word Colleges in the Ilocos Region, particularly it seeks to investigate the following questions:

1. What is the leadership skills of office heads of Divine Word Colleges in the Ilocos Region in terms of
   a. Communication
   b. Planning and organizing
   c. Problem-solving
   d. Developing people
   e. Motivating people
   f. Delegation and empowerment
2. What is the work engagement of employees of Divine Word Colleges in the Ilocos Region in terms of
   a. Cognitive engagement
   b. Physical engagement
   c. Emotional/psychological engagement
3. Is there a relationship between leadership skills and the work engagement of employees?

Assumptions

The study assumes that leadership skills can influence work engagement and both, leadership skills and work engagement can be measured. Further, the study assumes that the questionnaires that are used to measure them are valid.

Hypothesis

The study of Asrar-ul-Haq and Kuchinke (2016) found that there is a relationship between leadership styles and their attitude toward their leaders and their work performance. The current study also hypothesizes that leadership skills affect the work engagement of employees.

Scope and Delimitation of the Study

There can be a lot of leadership skills but the study limits itself to measure leadership skills along with communication, planning, and organizing, problem-solving, developing people, motivating people, delegation, and empowerment. The study covers only the office heads and employees of Divine Word Colleges in the Ilocos region.

Research and Methodology

The study was conducted through the use of appropriate research methodologies such as research design, data gathering instruments, population, the locale of the study, data gathering procedures, and statistical treatment of data.

Research Design

The study is a quantitative research and it used descriptive assessment and correlational research design. Baht (2020) defines descriptive research as a "research method that describes the characteristics of the population or the phenomena that are studied. It focuses more on the "what" of the research subject rather than the "why" of the research subject" (para. 1). This research designed is used to determine the level of leadership skills of office heads and their effect on the work engagement of employees of Divine Word Colleges in the Ilocos Region. The nature of descriptive research is to describe what is found in the data collected through questionnaires and statistical treatment. It is also used to describe profiles, frequency distribution, describe characteristics of people, situation, phenomena, or relationship variables. In short, it describes "what is" about the data (Ariola, 2006) cited by (Abun et al., 2019). Concerning the current study, the descriptive correlational method was deployed. The study determines the level of leadership skills and their effect on the work engagement of employees. This was to determine what the dominant leadership skills of heads were and to what extent it affects the work engagement of employees.

The locale of the Study

The locale of the study was Divine Word Colleges in Ilocos Sur and Ilocos Norte.

Population

The population of the study was composed of all employees and faculty of Divine Word Colleges in the Ilocos Region. The total enumeration sampling was used and 250 faculty and employees were taken as respondents of the study.

Data Gathering instruments

The study adopted validated questionnaires of Foronda (2010) on leadership skills and the questionnaires of Abun (2017) on work engagement.

Data Gathering Procedures

In the process of data gathering, the researcher sent letters to the President of the Colleges, requesting them to allow the researcher to flow his questionnaires in the college. The researcher personally met the Presidents and employees and requested them to answer the questionnaires. The retrieval of questionnaires was arranged between the President's representative and the researcher with the help of employees and faculty of the college.

Statistical Treatment of Data

In consistence with the study as a descriptive assessment and correlational research design, therefore descriptive statistics and inferential statistics were used. The weighted mean is used to determine the level of different leadership skills of office heads and the Pearson r was used to measure the correlation of different leadership skills toward the work engagement of employees.

The following ranges of values with their descriptive interpretation will be used:

Statistical Range	Descriptive Interpretation	Overall Descriptive Rating
4.21-5.00	*Strongly agree*	*Very High*
3.41-4.20	*Agree*	*High*
2.61-3.40	*Somewhat agree*	*Moderate*
1.81-2.60	*Disagree*	*Low/High*
1.00-1.80	*Strongly disagree*	*Very Low/Very High*

Empirical Data and Analysis

Empirical data analysis is an evidence-based approach to data analysis which are collected through data gathering instruments such as questionnaires or other instruments. This is based on one of the philosophies of education, that knowledge comes from direct experience which can be attained through the five senses (Rouse, 2020; Angelov et al., 2016). Based on the concept, this part presents and analyses the data gathered through questionnaires. The data are presented according to the arrangement of the statement of the problems.

Problem1: What is the leadership skills of office heads of Divine Word Colleges in the Ilocos Region in terms of:

a. Communication
b. Planning and organizing
c. Problem-solving
d. Developing people
e. Motivating people
f. Delegation, and empowerment

Table 1: The Leadership Skills of administrators of Divine Word Colleges in the Ilocos Region in terms of Communication

Indicators	Mean	DR
1. Communicates well on a one-on-one basis with the employees (clearly, positively, humanely, and with respect).	3.24	SWA
2. Updates the employees on what is going on with the institution.	3.21	SWA
3. Keeps his employees well informed on news that affects them and their jobs.	3.21	SWA
4. Can communicate with people professionally when under stress.	3.17	SWA
5. Takes quality time to explain his/her decisions, opinions, and recommendations to the employees.	3.16	SWA
6. Uses considerations and tact when communicating with others.	3.23	SWA
7. Communicates to the groups in an articulate, concise, and clear manner.	3.19	SWA
8. Takes time to listen to employees' problems.	3.18	SWA
9. Demonstrates willingness to change their opinions.	3.15	SWA
10. Keeps an open mind when hearing others' opinions or ideas.	3.21	SWA
Composite Mean	**3.20**	**SWA**

Source: Foronda, (2010)

As gleaned from the data presented on the table, it shows that as a whole, the leadership skills of administrators of Divine Word Colleges in the Ilocos region obtained a composite mean of 3.20 which means "somewhat agree" or "moderate level". This evaluation indicates that the leadership skill of administrators along communication skills is not high or very high and it is also not low or very low. Even the questions are taken separately, they show the same level of assessment such as "communicating well on a one-on-one basis with the employees (3.24), updating the employees on what is going on with the institution (3.21), keeping his/her employees well informed on news that affects them and their jobs (3.21), having the ability to communicate with people professionally when under stress (3.17), taking quality time to explain his/her decisions, opinions and recommendations to the employees (3.16), using considerations and tact when communicating with others (3.23), communicating to the groups in an articulate, concise, and clear manner (3.19), taking time to listen to employees' problems (3.18), demonstrating a willingness to change their opinions (3.15), keeping an open mind when hearing others' opinions or ideas" (3.21).

The result of the finding indicates that administrators of Divine Word Colleges in the Ilocos region need to improve their communication skills. There is a need to identify areas of weaknesses concerning communication with the employees and call for training to improve communication skills.

Table 2: The Leadership Skills of Administrators of Divine Word Colleges in the Ilocos Region in terms of Planning and Organizing

Indicators	Mean	DR
1. Vision and mission are clearly defined.	3.41	A
2. Organizational objectives are clearly defined.	3.39	SWA
3. Key result areas to be achieved are identified.	3.37	SWA
4. Key performance indicators are identified.	3.29	SWA
5. Strategies to execute the plan are identified.	3.27	SWA
6. Ensures that all employees or representatives from the different departments are involved in planning.	3.25	SWA
7. Uses the resources of the institution (people, funds, and facilities) wisely in achieving the objectives.	3.21	SWA
8. Provides budgets for departments to execute the plans.	3.24	SWA
Composite Mean	**3.30**	**SWA**

Source: Foronda (2010).

Based on the data, it reveals that as a whole, planning and organizing skills of administrators of Divine Word Colleges in the Ilocos region gained a composite mean of 3.30 which can be understood as "somewhat agree or moderate level". This evaluation demonstrates that the leadership skills of administrators in terms of planning and organizing are not high or very high and it is not also low or very low. Even when the items are taken singly, almost all the items have the same level of evaluation such as "organizational objectives are clearly defined (3.39), key result areas to be achieved are identified (3.37), key performance indicators are identified (3.29), strategies to execute the plan are identified (3.27), ensuring that all employees or representatives from the different department are involved in planning (3.25), using the resources of the institution (people, funds, and facilities) wisely in achieving the objectives (3.21), providing budgets for departments to execute the plans (3.24) and it was only one item that the employees agree such as having a vision and mission that are clearly defined" (3.41).

Given this result, it also points out the fact that the administrators are not performing high or very high concerning their planning and organizing skills and it demands a reflection and a critical analysis on how to improve their skills in terms of planning and organizing.

Table 3: The Leadership Skills of Administrators of Divine Word Colleges in the Ilocos Region in terms of Problem Solving

Indicators	Mean	DR
1. Defines problem situations and issues clearly so people can understand them.	3.32	SWA
2. Contributes to creative ideas and suggestions that help people solve problems.	3.30	SWA
3. Nurtures a climate of creative thinking and problem-solving.	3.22	SWA
4. Obtains the support of people responsible for implementing the solutions.	3.24	SWA
5. When things go wrong, consult people around him/her on how to solve the problem.	3.29	SWA
6. Responds to problems appropriately depending on the severity of the problem.	3.31	SWA
7. When solving a problem, evaluates different alternative actions.	3.28	SWA
Composite Mean	**3.28**	**SWA**

Source: Foronda, (2010)

Looking at the data on the table, it manifests that as a whole, leadership skills of administrators in terms of problem-solving reach a composite mean of 3. 28 which is interpreted as "somewhat agree or moderate level". Such a level of capability points out that their problem-solving skill is not high or very high and it is not also low or very low. Even if the items are taken separately, all items have the same level of evaluation such as "defining problem situations and issues clearly so people can understand them (3.32), contributing creative ideas and suggestions that help people solve problems (3.30), nurturing a climate of creative thinking and problem solving (3.22), obtaining the support of people responsible for implementing the solutions (3.24), consulting people around him/her on how to solve the problem (3.29), responding to problems appropriately depending on the severity of the problem (3.31), and evaluating different alternative actions when solving problems" (3. 28).

This finding also demonstrates the fact that the leadership skill of administrators along problem-solving is considered moderate and needs improvement.

Table 4: The Leadership Skills of Administrators of Divine Word Colleges in the Ilocos Region in terms of Developing People

Indicators	Mean	DR
1. Helps the employees identify their strengths and weaknesses and help them develop their strengths.	3.23	SWA
2. Demonstrates commitment to their employees by investing financial resources in training and development.	3.17	SWA
3. Deals with performance problems promptly.	3.23	SWA
4. Teaches, and coaches people skillfully to help them handle specific challenges and problems.	3.27	SWA
5. Gives constructive feedback effectively (regularly, firmly, humanely).	3.19	SWA
6. Uses performance appraisal as the basis for training and development.	3.22	SWA
7. Provides an accurate and thorough performance appraisal for their employees.	3.19	SWA
Composite Mean	**3.21**	**SWA**

Source: Foronda (2010).

Concerning the leadership skills on developing people, the data shows that as a whole, the administrators gain a composite mean of 3.21 which can be interpreted as "somewhat agree or moderate level". Such a result indicates that the leadership skills of administrators in terms of developing people are not high or very high and it is not also low or very low. Even when the questions are rated separately, they all point out the same level of evaluation such as "helping the employees identify their strength and weaknesses and help them develop their strength (3.23), demonstrating a commitment to their employees by investing financial resources in training and development (3.17), dealing with performance problems promptly (3.23), teaching, and coaches people skillfully to help them handle specific challenges and problems (3.27), giving constructive feedback effectively (regularly, firmly,

humanely) (3.19), using performance appraisal as the basis for training and development (3.22), and providing an accurate and thorough performance appraisal for their employees" (3.19).

The results still point out the same concern about developing people's leadership skills. The evaluation calls for a review on their attention to develop their employees to become a leader and to become better in the performance of their duties.

Table 5: The Leadership Skills of Office Heads of Divine Word Colleges in the Ilocos Region in terms of Motivating People

Indicators	Mean	DR
1. Shows genuine concern for others as individuals.	3.27	SWA
2. Gives credit and recognition to others when they do a good job.	3.27	SWA
3. Generates enthusiasm among employees by appreciating their accomplishments.	3.28	SWA
4. Understands what needs that motivate employees to work hard and fulfill them.	3.22	SWA
5. Appropriately rewards the highest achievers for their contributions.	3.18	SWA
6. Focuses on the positive aspects of the employees and not the bad side.	3.24	SWA
7. Becomes a role model and encourages a positive outlook with employees.	3.20	SWA
Composite Mean	**3.24**	**SWA**

Source: Foronda (2010).

As pointed out by data on the table, it appears that as a whole, the leadership skills of administrators in terms of motivation employees obtained a composite mean of 3.24 which means "somewhat agree or moderate level". Such perception demonstrates that the leadership skills of administrators along motivating people are not high or very high and it is not also low or very low but they are at a moderate level. Even if the questions are rated singly, they all have the same level of perception such as "showing genuine concern for others as individuals (3.27), giving credit and recognition to others when they do a good job (3.27), generating enthusiasm among employees by appreciating their accomplishments (3.28), understanding what needs that motivate employees to work hard and fulfill them (3.22), appropriately rewarding the highest achievers for their contributions(3.18), focusing on the positive aspects of the employees and not the bad side (3.24), and becoming a role model and encourages a positive outlook with employees" (3.20).

The evaluation demonstrates a fact that the leadership skill of administrators along motivating employees is considered moderate and it calls the attention of the administrators to revisit their skills on how to motivate their employees.

Table 6: The Leadership Skills of Office Heads of Divine Word Colleges in the Ilocos Region in terms of Delegation and Empowerment

Indicators	Mean	DR
Delegates task to team members effectively (fully, clearly, granting appropriate authority to decide).	3.26	SWA
Sets and enforces clear priorities to guide their employee's work.	3.29	SWA
Trust employees to do the work without excessive checking on their performance.	3.29	SWA
Allows the employees to do their work and backs them up when they need it.	3.16	SWA
Gives employees enough authority to do their job.	3.25	SWA
When delegating work, he/she provides the necessary support and information to be successful.	3.21	SWA
7. Does not intervene in the work of employees if it is not necessary.	3.24	SWA
8. Acts as a coach to the employees when necessary.	3.19	SWA
Composite Mean	**3.24**	**SWA**

Source: Foronda (2010).

One of the crucial elements of leadership is delegation and empowerment. The data reveals that as a whole, the leadership skill of administrators along delegation and empowerment reached 3.24 composite mean which means "somewhat agree or moderate level". The evaluation demonstrates that the leadership skill of administrators along delegation and empowerment is not high or very high and it is not also low or very low. Even when the questions rated separately, they all have the same level of assessment such as "delegating the task to team members effectively (fully, clearly, granting appropriate authority to decide (3.26), setting and enforcing clear priorities to guide their employee's work (3.29), trusting employees to do the work without excessive checking on their performance (3.29), allowing the employees to do their work and backs them up when they need it(3.16), giving employees enough authority to do their job (3.25), providing the necessary support and information to be successful when delegating the work (3.21), acting as a coach to the employees when necessary (3.19), and not intervening in the work of employees if it is not necessary" (3.24).

The results point out the same concern that the leadership skill of administrators along delegation and empowerment is considered moderate. Again the evaluation indicates that there must something to be done to improve their skills in terms of delegating authority to the employees to develop their employees to be a leader.

Table 7: Summary of Leadership Skills of Administrators of Divine Word Colleges in the Ilocos Region

Indicators	Mean	DR
1. Communication	3.20	SWA
2. Planning and organizing	3.30	SWA
3. Problem-solving	3.28	SWA
4. Developing people	3.21	SWA
5. Motivating people	3.24	SWA
6. Delegation and empowerment	3.24	SWA
Overall Mean	**3.24**	**SWA**

Source: Foronda (2010).

The summary table concludes that as a whole, the leadership skills of administrators of Divine Word Colleges in the Ilocos region obtained an overall mean of 3.24 which is understood as "somewhat agree or moderate level". Such a result demonstrates that overall, the leadership of administrators is not high or very high and it is not also or very low. Even when the components of leadership skills are taken separately, they all fall within the same rating such as communication skill (3.20), planning and organizing (3.30), Problem-solving (3.28), developing people (3.21), motivating people (3.24), and delegation and empowerment (3.24).

The results conclude that the leadership skills of administrators are considered moderate which calls the attention of the administrators to improve their leadership skills in all aspects measured under this study.

Problem 2: What is the work engagement of employees of Divine Word Colleges in the Ilocos Region in terms of

a. Cognitive engagement
b. Emotional/psychological engagement
c. Physical engagement

Table 8: The Work Engagement of Employees of Divine Word Colleges in the Ilocos Region in terms of Cognitive Engagement

Indicators	Mean	DR
1. I know my work.	4.01	A
2. My work requires my mental ability.	3.96	A
3. I am sure that I know and I can perform my job.	3.95	A
4. I have all the knowledge and skills that match with my work.	3.91	A
5. Given the right environment, I want to contribute ideas to my work.	3.92	A
Composite Mean	**3.95**	**A**

Source: Kuok and Taormina, 2017, Abun, 2017.

As gleaned from the data presented on the table, it demonstrates that as a whole, work engagement of employees in terms of cognitive engagement obtained a composite mean of 3.95 which means "agree or high". This result indicates that the work engagement of employees in terms of cognitive engagement is high but not very high and it is not also moderate, low, or very low. Even when the questions are rated separately, all items are rated within the same level of evaluation such as "knowing their work (4.01), their work requiring mental ability (3.96), knowing that they can perform their work (3.95), having all the knowledge and skills that match with their work (3.91) and wanting to contribute ideas to their work given the right environment" (3.92). Though the result indicates that employees' work engagement is considered high, however, it is not also very high. It needs to be improved and needs some kind of development training to improve their knowledge and their engagement in their work.

Table 9: The Work Engagement of Employees of Divine Word Colleges in the Ilocos Region in terms of Emotional/Psychological (Affective) Engagement

Indicators	Mean	DR
1. I am happy with my work.	3.84	A
2. I feel good because I have the skills to do my job.	3.94	A
3. I am happy to contribute ideas to the attainment of the goals	3.90	A
4. I am just lucky to work with my employers who motivate us to work.	3.81	A
5. I am always energized to face my work daily.	3.79	A
Composite Mean	**3.86**	**A**

Source: Kuok and Taormina, 2017, Abun, 2017.

As pointed out in the table, it shows that as a whole, work engagement of employees along the affective component obtained a composite mean of 3.86 which means "agree or high". This result proves that the work engagement of employees along the affective component is high but not very high and it is also not moderate, low, or very low. Even if the items are taken separately, they all have the same level of ratings such as " they are happy with their work (3.84), are feeling good because they have the skills to do their job (3.94), are happy to contribute ideas to the attainment of the goals (3.90), are just lucky to work with my employers who motivate us to work (3.81), and are always energized to face their work daily (3.79).

This result points out that the employees agree that their affective work engagement is high. Though it is high it is not very high which means that some improvement needs to be done to reach their very high-level engagement.

Table 10: The Work Engagement of Employees of Divine Word Colleges in the Ilocos Region in terms of Physical (Conative) Engagement

Indicators	Mean	DR
1. I have never been absent from my work.	3.61	A
2. I leave my office only at lunchtime.	3.69	A
3. I see to it that I start working on time and leave the work only when it is five P.M.	3.70	A
4. Staying in the office and doing something good for my work is better than wandering around without any purpose.	3.86	A
5. I am attached to my work hence I have to do what I am assigned to do	3.86	A
6. I have to do the best I can in my work.	3.95	A
Composite Mean	**3.78**	**A**

Source: Kuok and Taormina, 2017, Abun, 2017.

Based on the data presented in the table, it reveals that as a whole, work engagement of employees in terms of physical engagement reached a composite mean of 3.78 which means "agree or high". This result demonstrates that the work engagement of employees along with physical engagement is high but not very high and it is also not moderate, low, or very low. Even if the questions are rated separately, they all still have the same level of mean rating such as " they have never been absent in their work (3.61), leave their office only at lunchtime (3.69), start working on time and leave the work only it is time to leave (3.70), stay in the office and do something good for their work is better than wandering around without any purpose (3.86), are attached to their work hence they have to do what they are assigned to do (3.86), and they have to do the best they can in their work (3.95).

The findings indicate the work engagement of employees along with physical engagement is considered high but not very high. Again, though it is high, it is still important to improve employees' physical work engagement because it is only through physical work engagement, the employees can deliver the output.

Table 11: Summary of Work Engagement of Employees of Divine Word Colleges in the Ilocos Region

Items	Mean	DR
1. Cognitive Engagement	3.95	A
2. Physical Engagement (Conative)	3.78	A
3. Emotional/Psychological Engagement (Affective)	3.79	A
Overall Mean	**3.84**	**A**

Source: Kuok and Taormina, 2017, Abun, 2017.

The summary table demonstrates that as a whole, work engagement of employees gained an overall mean of 3.84 which means high. This indicates that employees' work engagement is considered high but not very high and it is not also moderate, low, or very low. Even the sub-variables of work engagement are also considered high such as cognitive engagement (3.95), emotional or affective engagement (3.79), and physical engagement (3.78).

The result points out that the employees are engaged in their work and their engagement is considered high. However, it is not very high which demands an improvement in their work engagement because their high cognitive and affective engagement must translate into high performance or very performance.

Problem 3: Is there a relationship between leadership skills and the work engagement of employees?

Table 12: Relationship between Leadership Skills and Work Engagement

		Cognitive Engagement	Physical Engagement (Conative)	Emotional/ Psychological Engagement (Affective)
Communication	Pearson Correlation	.238**	.250**	.269**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.005	.003	.001
	N	140	140	140
Planning and Organizing	Pearson Correlation	.303**	.347**	.356**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000
	N	140	140	140
Problem Solving	Pearson Correlation	.242**	.211*	.243**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.004	.012	.004
	N	140	140	140
Developing People	Pearson Correlation	.233**	.249**	.294**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.006	.003	.000
	N	140	140	140
Motivating People	Pearson Correlation	.252**	.277**	.301**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	.001	.000
	N	140	140	140
Delegation and empowerment	Pearson Correlation	.245**	.285**	.296**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.004	.001	.000
	N	140	140	140

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

 *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Pearson r or Product-Moment Correlation result indicates that there is a significant correlation at 0.01 level (2-tailed) and 0.05 level (2-tailed) between leadership skill and work engagement of employees. Even the sub-variables of leadership skills are significantly correlated to the work engagement of employees. This result demonstrates that improving the work engagement of employees requires leadership improvement. Thus it is a call for the administrators to develop their leadership skills to improve employees' work engagement.

Results and Discussion

The findings of the study show that the leadership skill of administrators are still considered moderate and it was also found that leadership skill of administrator affects the employees' work engagement. It means that improving leadership skills is an important factor to improve the work engagement of employees. Failing to improve leadership skills particularly along those six components may result in to decrease in work engagement. Decreasing work engagement can affect the output and the performance of individual employees and the performance of the organization. The study of Abbas and Yaqoob (2009) on the effect of leadership development training toward the work performance of employees indicated that 50% of employees' work performance is contributed by the leadership skills of the management. Chowdhury (2014) pointed out in his study that leadership capability or leadership styles are contributing factors to employees' motivation and commitment. In the school context, it means that the better the leadership skills of administrators are, the better the work engagement can be. Deslie (2020) and Carter (2020) pointed out that the success of an organization is contingent upon the leader to exercise power effectively.

The results of the study are important information for the administrators to initiate programs or seminars that can enhance the leadership skills of administrators. The quality of education depends not only on the faculty and employee's work engagement but it also depends on the leadership skills of administrators.

Conclusion

The finding of the study supports the hypothesis of the study that there is a correlation between leadership skills and work engagement. Work engagement of employees depends on the leadership skills of administrators and therefore the hypothesis of the study is accepted. Solving leadership problems will lead to the improvement of the work engagement of the employees.

The study also recognizes its limitation. The study is limited to Divine Word Colleges in Ilocos Region and the number of employees is limited and therefore the study may not represent the whole leadership situation of Divine Word Colleges in the Philippines. Besides, the sub-variables under leadership skills are also limited covering only six components of leadership skills. There is a need to study comprehensively all different leadership skills and to include a wider population to capture a comprehensive leadership picture.

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