

Engagement of Educators in Private Family Business Schools: The Role of a Healthy Leadership Environment

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Type of manuscript: research paper

Abstract: *Educators play a crucial role in youth preparation, education, work, and life. They manage classroom environments, engage learners, and act as leaders. The public education system in South Africa is facing a crisis, with private family business schools (PFBSs) emerging. Educators in South Africa face challenges in youth preparation, education, work, and life, requiring a healthy leadership environment to manage classroom environments and engage learners. Thus, a healthy leadership environment is essential for educators to feel involved in their work. However, low employee engagement levels can lead to economic challenges such as unemployment, poverty, and inequality, exacerbated by illiteracy. This paper summarises the arguments and counterarguments within the scientific discussion on the issue of the significance of apt leadership for employee engagement. The aim of the paper was to examine the extent to which leadership predicts levels of engagement of educators in private family business schools. The relevance of this scientific study is that it gives key information to leaders in private family business schools on how leadership is paramount for educators to be engaged. The investigation of the topic in this study is carried out in the following logical sequence: Introduction, literature review, methodology, data analysis and results, discussion, recommendations, conclusion, limitations, future research, acknowledgements and research funding and references. The study followed an explanatory, non-experimental research design using a positivist research paradigm and approached this study from a unique axiology, ontology, epistemology, technique, and rhetorical stance that set the tone for ontological, epistemological, methodological, axiological, and rhetorical positions. Using a census sampling technique, data was collected using structured, self-administered, emailed, and drop-off questionnaires. This study's hypothesis was tested using appropriate inferential statistics. Non-parametric analysis techniques were used to test the research hypothesis. The research empirically confirms and theoretically proves that leadership predicts engagement levels of educators in PFBSs. The results of the study can be helpful to leaders in private family business schools in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa and other regions of the world.*

Keywords: educator, engagement, leadership, private family business school.

JEL Classification: C29, J01, O13, O49.

Received: 01 June 2023

Accepted: 29 July 2023

Published: 30 September 2023

Funding: There is no funding for this research.

Publisher: Academic Research and Publishing UG (i.G.) (Germany)

Founder: Sumy State University and Academic Research and Publishing UG (i.G.) (Germany)

Cite as: Masha, A.K., Bwowe, P., & Nikisi, E. (2023). Engagement of Educators in Private Family Business Schools: The Role of a Healthy Leadership Environment. *Business Ethics and Leadership*, 7(3), 20-39. [http://doi.org/10.61093/bel.7\(3\).20-39.2023](http://doi.org/10.61093/bel.7(3).20-39.2023).



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1. Introduction

Educators play a significant role in preparing our youth as they make important decisions about education, work, and life (Patimo, 2021). Educators serve several other purposes in schools. Educators are curriculum agents who effectively deal with curriculum implementation (Carl, 2018). Educators understand and engage today's learners (Mokoena, 2019), manage the classroom environment, manage learner participation in the classroom, manage parental and community involvement, manage classrooms through effective administration and teamwork, establish classroom management plans (Wydeman, 2019), act as leaders in schools (Van Niekerk, 2019) and manage learner safety, manage classrooms legally including classroom discipline (Coetzee, 2019). Educators play a critical role in influencing their colleagues, principals, the school management team, and other members of the school community to improve teaching and learning practices to increase student learning and achievement" (Van Deventer, 2019). For educators to succeed in their profession and vocation, they need to receive sound leadership from management in the private family business school (PFBS). In this regard, leadership is needed for educators to feel engaged in their schoolwork.

The South African public education system has been described as a crisis (Roodt, 2018). Private schools, some of which are run as PFBSs, have mushroomed, especially in urban centres. The PFBSs are created to exploit the opportunity that parents want the best for their children in terms of education, and they are prepared to pay high tuition fees for that cause (Roodt, 2018). Consequently, there is increased demand for independent schools, especially PFBSs. Inadequate academic performance has a negative impact not only on the National Development Plan (NDP) but also on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and Agenda 2063 of the African Union.

For schools to perform optimally, a "healthy leadership environment" is required (Van Deventer, 2019: 120). Employers can increase their chances of hiring and retaining valuable employees by providing a friendly, development-enabling environment that leads to employee engagement (Motyka, 2018). Educators must be completely engaged in their jobs for students to perform well. Yet, as the literature suggests, employee engagement levels in South Africa and globally are low. It may be attributed to autocratic culture, ineffective communication, lack of adequate supervision among family members (in family-run businesses), difficulty attracting professional management, lack of recognition, and poor leadership (Venter, 2016). Low engagement of educators has far-reaching consequences, such as poor performance of learners that leads to triple economic challenges of high unemployment, poverty, and inequality which often exacerbate illiteracy levels in society (Bezuidenhout, 2022). High levels of illiteracy create proper conditions for poor health, compromised living standards, low self-esteem (Roux, 2020), and forced urban migration in search of jobs, livelihood, and a better future (Biko, 2019).

Although this study is on leadership, it is on leadership, involves aspects of the human resources management discipline which deals with the satisfaction of the needs of employees through policies and practices that motivate them and heighten their morale at work (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020; Chinyamurindi & Shava, 2021; Rudansky-Kloppers, 2021). Despite a plethora of literature on employee engagement in organisations, there is hardly anything on teacher engagement in PFBSs hence this study addresses this lacuna. Drawing on data from educators and their immediate supervisors across three PFBSs in the Eastern Cape, this study examines the extent to which leadership predicts educators' engagement levels in PFBSs. The statistical analysis of this study was conducted under significant testing where we posed a null hypothesis and then attempted to reject that hypothesis (Borenstein, 2021). Thus, the following hypothesis was developed: H_0 : Leadership does not predict educators' engagement levels in PFBSs.

Although this paper only deals with leadership in PFBSs, the hypothesis was tested in conjunction with two other organisational-based factors: nature of work (Factor 1) and physical working conditions (Factor 2). These two organisational-based factors were part of a bigger project whose aggregation permitted mathematically sound comparisons and consistencies to be made.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Schools as Organisations. Handy (1995) informs us that only a few studies have been conducted exclusively on the school as an organisation. Although scholars (Erasmus & Van der Westhuizen, 2016; Mentz & Xaba, 2016; Mentz, 2016; Theron, 2016; Van der Vyer, Van der Westhuizen & Meyer, 2016; Van der Westhuizen & Mentz, 2016; Xaba & Janson, 2016) are divided as to whether educators are employees and whether schools are organisations. The position of this paper is that schools are organisations, a phenomenon that has existed since the 1990s (Handy, 1995).

Studies on schools as private and public organisations exist (Mentz & Xaba, 2016). Barker (2020) defines it as two or more people who intentionally work together to achieve a set of objectives. While organisations include business and education (Angelopulo & Thomson, 2020), a school is defined by the structure and quality of the work environment (Katz & Khan, 1966) and organisation of authority, socialisation, and change in behaviour (Corwin & Edelfelt, 1977). As organisations, schools are a collection of people in an educational context that allow individuals to work together to achieve various educational goals, such as creating a culture of teaching and learning (Van Wyk et al., 2019).

2.2 Family Business. A family business is a business that has at least 51 per cent ownership by a single family, at least two family members are involved in management or operational activities and the transfer of leadership to the next generation of family members is anticipated (Co et al., 2018; Farrington & Jappie, 2017; Venter, 2016). In this study, a PFBS is an institution designed for teaching students under educators' supervision (South African Schools Act No. 84 of 1996) but is run as a family business.

2.3 Engagement. Engagement involves the voluntary participation of the body, mind, soul, and spirit (Afsar et al., 2020; Chooi et al., 2018; Holtom & Darabi, 2018). 76% of scholars in Motyka's (2018) study adopted the definition put forward by Schaufeli et al. (2002: 74) of employee or worker engagement as "a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterised by vigour, being highly energetic; dedication, being highly involved in work and absorption; being highly concentrated in work". This study deals with personal or self-engagement, which manifests as a function of educators' different work roles in PFBSs (Joubert & Roodt, 2019).

2.4 Why Educators Should be Engaged. Educators influence youths to make important decisions about education, work, and life (Patimo, 2021). They implement curricula (Carl, 2018), understanding and engaging learners' classroom participation (Mokoena, 2019). Teachers facilitate parental and community involvement and provide effective administration and teamwork by establishing a classroom management plan (Wydeman, 2019). In addition, they act as leaders in schools (Van Niekerk, 2019) and manage discipline (Coetzee, 2019). Given this, it is imperative that teachers should be engaged. Engaged educators are more productive, less likely to leave, and more likely to thrive (Bravery et al., 2020). They become engaged with their team, colleagues, organisational unit, and beyond (Habraken et al., 2019; Hicklenton et al., 2019; Mayer, 2019; Saks, 2017; Veldsman, 2019). Since engagement predicts job performance (Ahmetoglu et al., 2018) and educators' engagement boosts the school's viability (Veldsman, 2021), it is evident that teacher engagement is paramount in establishing a prosperous and academically sound school system.

2.5 How Leadership Leads to Employee Engagement. Leadership is a power mechanism consisting of two or more people (Alayoubi et al., 2020) who guides, empowers, and motivates others to contribute to the productivity and advancement of organisations (Anwar, 2017). It involves setting a new direction or vision for a group and requires knowledge, skills, and professionalism (Ferkinset al., 2018; Mentz, 2020; Poisat, 2021; Roussel et al., 2018; Vrba, 2022). Ali and Anwar (2021) reveal how, by holding various roles in organisations, leaders are responsible for overhauling them in line with organisational goals and employee development.

Leaders use different methods to inspire their subordinates through clearly defined goals, such as subtle persuasion to apply coercive authority overtly (Altman & Tushman, 2017). They also organise the workplace by modifying communication patterns to enable employees to achieve corporate objectives (Ali, 2020). There are pre-conditions for people to become personally engaged and perform their work in a way that unlocks accurate, unique, value-consistent, and continuously delightful results for the organisation's beneficiaries (Albrecht et al., 2015). PFBSs must create distinct, compelling, fulfilling, and memorable employee experiences, which must be viewed within different employment and work relationships between organisations and their employees (Veldsman, 2021). There has been a global shift towards ensuring

efficient and result-oriented employees since managers realise that a highly engaged workforce increases productivity while reducing the costs of hiring and retaining personnel in a highly competitive labour market (Agbionu et al., 2018; Peters, 2019; Siwisa-Damasane, 2020). Thus, as averred by Bakker (2011), researchers have concluded that intrinsic motivational factors such as inspiring leadership should be addressed for employees to be fully engaged.

After teaching, leadership is the second most important factor influencing school and learner outcomes (Leithwood et al., 2006). For educators to be engaged, school leaders must offer inspiration and ideas that motivate others. School leaders are expected to encapsulate the essence of a servant leader, who empowers others by working with them not for selfish gains but for the advantage of all members. They are expected to be organisational planners who initiate and orchestrate change; leading professionals who understand work contexts and demands; demonstrate transmissible values to guide relationships and social architects who establish consciousness of social development and transformational educational issues (Van Deventer, 2019).

Prinsloo (2019) posits that the success or failure of all school activities depends on the entire staff. Therefore, educational leaders need to be armed with the skills required to direct people's actions and to motivate them to realise the school's objectives. Use or disregard of various management skills or principles can positively or negatively affect the performance, establishment, and maintenance of harmonious relationships in a school. Good leaders maintain good relations and enforce the completion of formal activities within the school when necessary (Prinsloo, 2019).

Effective leadership entails defining the business of PFBSs, creating a winning strategy (Ngambi, 2022), respecting others, acting decisively, and behaving with integrity (du Plessis, 2020). Underlining good leadership is the art of mastering communication skills (Botha, 2019; de Beer, 2017; Henrico & Visser, 2017). Leaders who fail to recognise the link between an engaged workforce and organisational outcomes endanger their organisations (Keyko et al., 2016). An organisation's failure to appoint managers with the right attributes undermines efforts to promote educators' engagement (Mabasa, 2018) because members' loyalty within organisations is greatly determined by leadership (Bussin, 2018). Leaders should be people-centric. The people excellence specification sets the overarching parameters for the type of leadership necessary to make people excellence a reality in the organisation. This is leadership for whom it is natural to set up and maintain organisational conditions under which people can be empowered (World Economic Forum, 2019).

People-centric leadership satisfies the basic psychological needs of followers, enabling them to thrive and feel fulfilled by being engaged. Leadership that achieves the above-stated expectations is perceived reciprocally and positively by followers. This type of leadership is exercised by what is referred to as 'engaging leaders' (Rahmadani et al., 2019). These practices include setting direction, developing people, redesigning the organisation, and managing the instructional (teaching and learning) programme. These leaders can nurture engaging employees. They attempt to answer the question: "What am I supposed to do as a leader to actualise and bring into practice what is in the organisation's best interest - what do I believe strongly in, given the leadership vantage point from which I stand?" (Marishane, 2016).

Therefore, leadership is fundamentally focused on how to get the best out of people (Botha, 2019). After establishing a family business, it must be managed. Contributions by all members must be integrated and different business and managerial functions should be coordinated. Management functions of the business include planning, organising, leading and controlling. The leader should also manage various organisational functions such as finance, marketing, production, purchasing, administration, human resources, and public relations (Botha, 2019; Nieuwenhuizen, 2019; Oosthuizen, 2021). It requires certain skills, attributes, characteristics, and traits. Engagement of educators can be seen when school leaders and management identify greater roles and responsibilities necessary in creating and shaping a learning environment that facilitates the development of the collective capacity of the school and its community. Furthermore, they need to actively motivate educators, promote reflection and collaboration, and model the desired commitment, values, norms, and practices (Gemedda & Tynjälä, 2015).

2.6 Theoretical Review

2.6.1 Employee Engagement Theory. This study is grounded in employee engagement theory credited to Kahn (1990) and posits that engagement is crucial to employee retention. Kahn was interested in moments when people bring themselves into or remove themselves from task behaviours. In other words, how does engagement occur and what prevents it? From this, we can consider what to do to improve employee

engagement. This research seeks to ascertain the effect of engagement on educators in PFBSs. This theory is timely and clarifies this research as employment turnover continuously grows. A firm theoretical base strengthens research by identifying assumptions and enables the researcher to evaluate and critique them (Cohen et al., 2019).

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design. It was a non-experimental, explanatory, and correlational study (Fouché & Roestenburg, 2022; Pietersen & Maree, 2022; Ugwuanyi, 2022) in which the researchers used a quantitative research approach to investigate the phenomenon of engagement through natural sciences (Argyres et al., 2020). Positivism enabled the study to verify causal relationships between dependent and independent variables (Baker-Townsend & Bloom, 2023; Schurink et al., 2022; Wolhuter, 2022). The researchers designed a structured questionnaire that was dropped off or emailed to educators in four PFBSs to obtain large quantities of numerical data (Bertram & Christensen, 2021; Johnson & Christensen, 2020; Masha & Eze, 2022). A census sampling technique was employed to acquire data from every member of the targeted population (Johnson & Christensen, 2020). The instrument was validated using content and face validity. Content validity was met when the researchers requested two experts to check if the research instrument included all the necessary contents of the measured concept (Jones, 2022; Pietersen & Maree, 2022; Yusoff, 2019). For face validity, the experts were requested to adjust and enhance the instrument to be valid (Bahariniya et al., 2021; de Klerk & van Wyk, 2022; Einola & Alvesson, 2021).

3.2 Ethical Considerations. The researchers obtained an ethical clearance certificate after satisfying the requirements of the research ethics committee (Safdar et al., 2020; Sefotho, 2022; Sivasubramaniam et al., 2021) and obtained permission for goodwill (Strydom & Roestenburg, 2022) from the PFBSs where the respondents were based. Before data collection, they secured informed consent from all the respondents (Hancock et al., 2020; Josephson & Smale, 2020; Trochin, 2020) and assured them of their confidentiality and anonymity (Alrehaili & Mustaha, 2020; Babbie, 2021; Hoft, 2021).

4. Data Analysis and Results

4.1 Reliability of Instrument. Cronbach Alpha tests were used to add consistency and accuracy to the questionnaire (van Aardt & Hirschsohn, 2021), to indicate the reliability and internal consistency of this study's research instrument (Dalyanto, 2021), to determine the degree to which different items were positively linked (Bougie & Sekaran, 2020; Clifton, 2020; Nayak & Singh, 2021), and to determine the reliability of multiple-question Likert scale surveys and selected categories of scales such as quality, frequency, and uniqueness (Zikmund et al., 2019).

It is mentioned by Hair et al. (2017) that when a construct reliability score receives a value of 0.7 or more, the scale can be deemed highly reliable. In this study, all the scales received a 0.72 coefficient value or more, confirming that all the constructs were highly reliable. The researchers used non-parametric hypothesis-testing steps to draw statistical inferences (Manzini & Mhalure, 2022) and SPSS and AMOS Statistics software to analyse data. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used to assess the reliability of the established factor structure. A descriptive analysis was used to describe the study's demographic features, Spearman's Rho correlation coefficient was used to examine the nature, strength, and direction of the correlations between levels of engagement and the study's theoretical constructs. Linear regression models using structural equation modeling and scale-free partial least estimates were used for all measurement and structural models. All necessary assumptions were assessed and addressed.

A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted on the 54 items. Thus 18 items measured the nature of work (Factor 1), 13 items measured physical working conditions (Factor 2) and 23 items measured leadership (Factor 3). Items with poor loadings were removed, and the most parsimonious model was achieved with 17 items retained. All factor loadings were above 0.68 (see Table 1 below).

Table 1. Organisational-Based Factors Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Internal Consistency Output

Factors and respective items	CODE	CFA Loadings	Alpha if Item
Nature of work			
My job is interesting.	NOW1	0.853	0.839
I get considerable opportunity for independence in how I do my ...	NOW2	0.955	0.884
I have stimulating tasks in my job.	NOW11	0.876	0.861
I have job characteristics such as skills variety.	NOW15	0.753	0.888
<i>Cronbach's Alpha = 0.900; Joreskog rho = 0.920; Average Variance Extracted (AVE) = 0.744</i>			

Table 1 (cont.). Organisational-Based Factors Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Internal Consistency Output

Physical working conditions			
I feel safe in my general workplace.	PWC1	0.730	0.928
There is available office space in keeping pace with...	PWC5	0.902	0.900
My office has comfortable chairs.	PWC7	0.930	0.898
My office has controlled temperature.	PWC8	0.858	0.902
Toilets are always clean.	PWC12	0.842	0.908
<i>Cronbach's Alpha = 0.925; Joreskog rho = 0.931; Average Variance Extracted (AVE) = 0.731</i>			
Leadership			
Management provides collective leadership towards achieving ...	LSP1	0.936	0.966
Management takes the school in a positive direction.	LSP2	0.686	0.975
There is sufficient transformational leadership within the ...	LSP4	0.939	0.966
Management has apt leadership qualities.	LSP5	0.950	0.968
Management is open to suggestions and opinions of educators.	LSP7	0.964	0.965
Management has entrepreneurial qualities such as encouraging ...	LSP8	0.930	0.972
Management is considerate to educators.	LSP10	0.899	0.971
Management uses a SWOT analysis often to see how the PFBS ...	LSP22	0.922	0.973
<i>Cronbach's Alpha = 0.973; Joreskog rho = 0.974; Average Variance Extracted (AVE) = 0.823</i>			

Source: Compiled by the authors

As shown in Table 1 above, the value of the average variance extracted for all the established factors is greater than the required minimum of 0.50, i.e., nature of work (AVE = 0.744), physical working conditions (AVE = 0.731) and leadership (AVE = 0.823). Since the minimum cut-off point for AVE is 0.50, the convergent validity for all the factors is deemed adequate. Further, the Cronbach alpha coefficient was used to measure these factors' internal consistency. Assessing this coefficient, the value was at least 0.890 for all the constructs, i.e., nature of work (alpha = 0.900), physical working conditions (alpha = 0.925) and leadership (alpha = 0.973). A minimum of 0.70 is a recommended cut-off for good reliability. With these results, the reliability of the established factors is suggestive of good and satisfactory reliability. For measuring composite reliability, the values of the Joreskog rho are also greater than 0.90 for all the constructs, i.e., nature of work (CR = 0.920), physical working conditions (CR = 0.931) and leadership (CR = 0.974). Thus, composite reliability is adequate for the established measurement model; hence, construct reliability is highly satisfactory.

Figure 1 below shows the path diagram for the CFA measurement model for the organisational-based factors. A clearer picture of the loaded items is portrayed in the path diagram. The established factor structure shows four items loading for the nature of work (Factor 1), five items also loading for physical working conditions (Factor 2) and eight items loading on leadership (Factor 3).

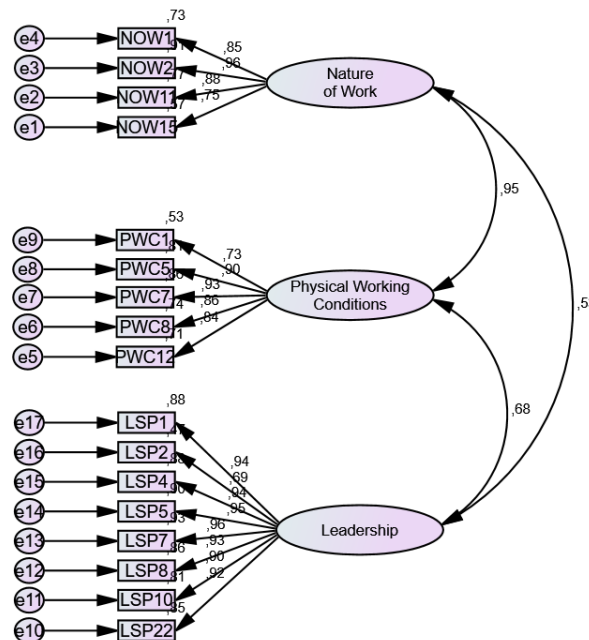


Figure 1. The Path Diagram for the Second-Order CFA Measurement Model of the Organisational-Based Factors

Source: Compiled by the authors

The measurement model showed a reasonably acceptable and good fit by examining the overall assessment criteria for model fitness. In Table 2 below, the SRMR is 0.087, regarded as an adequate model fit. The GFI and its associated AGFI were all above 0.95, which also suggests a good model fit. The normed appropriate index (NFI = 0.979) and the relative suitable index (RFI = 0.976) were also above 0.95, suggesting a good model fit for the established measurement model.

Table 2. The Fitness Measures Assessment for Organisational-Based Factors Measurement Model

Name of index	Index value	Cut-off points	Comments
SRMR	0.087	$0.05 < \text{SRMR} \leq 0.09$	Acceptable fit
GFI	0.982	≥ 0.95	Good fit
AGFI	0.976	≥ 0.95	Good fit
NFI	0.979	≥ 0.95	Good fit
RFI	0.976	≥ 0.95	Good fit

Note: *SRMR* = The Standardised Root Mean Square Residual. *GFI/AGFI* = The (Adjusted) Goodness of Fit. *NFI* = The (Non) Normed Fit Index. *RFI* = The Relative Fit Index, also known as *RHO1*

Source: Compiled by the authors

4.2 Descriptive Analysis of Major Theoretical Variables and Constructs: Organisational-Based Factors. It was imperative to conduct a means analysis of respondents' perceptions regarding organisational-based factors. Table 3 below shows the summary of the descriptive statistics for these factors.

Table 3. Summary of Descriptive Statistics for Organisational-Based Factors

Factor	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis	SW. Sig
Organisational-based factors					
Nature of work	4.1915	0.54485	-1.486	0.595	<0.0001
Physical working conditions	4.4548	0.54955	-1.171	-0.095	<0.0001
Leadership	4.6825	0.54530	-1.548	1.185	<0.0001

Note: *Oganisational-based factors* were measured on a 5-point Likert scale. *SW. Sig* is the significance of the Shapiro-Wilk test

Source: Compiled by the authors

The summary is displayed in terms of the mean scores and the respective standard deviation, the skewness and kurtosis coefficients, and the p-value for the Shapiro-Wilk test for normality. The organisational-based factors were measured on a 5-point Likert scale. The findings show that mean ratings for the organisational-based factors were also generally high. Thus, in the sample, the mean rating for nature of work (Mean = 4.1915; SD = 0.54485), physical working conditions (Mean = 4.4548; SD = 0.54955) and leadership (Mean = 4.6825; SD = 0.54530) were all above 4. It means that the sampled participants also perceived high levels of nature of work, physical working conditions, and leadership within the sector. Figure 2 below shows the mean plots for the established theoretical factors. The Shapiro-Wilk test, as well as the skewness and kurtosis coefficients, revealed that the organisational-based factors were inconsistent with the normal distribution, confirming the appropriateness of non-parametric approaches.

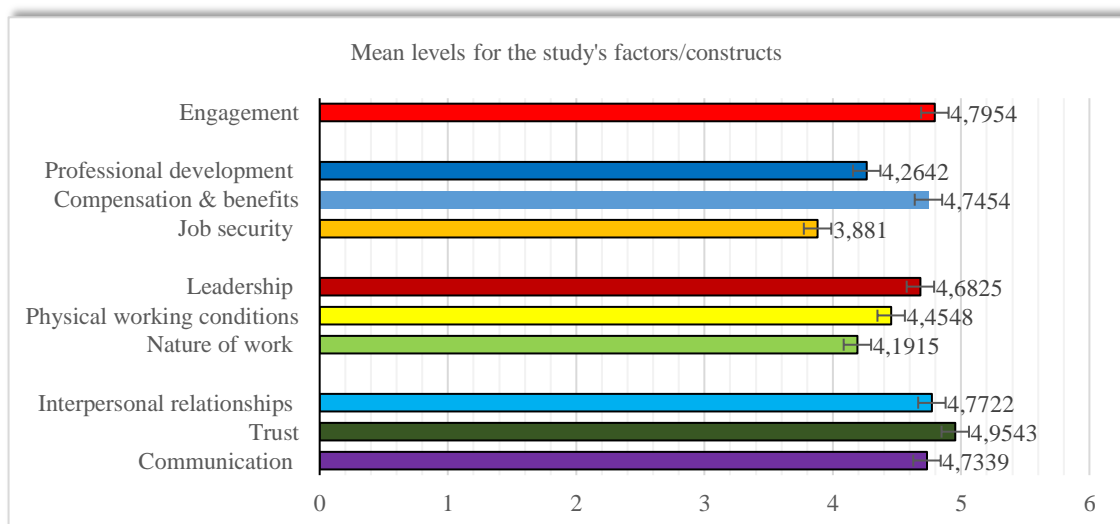


Figure 2. Mean Plots for the Established Theoretical Factors

Source: Compiled by the authors

4.3 Correlation Analysis. Due to the non-normality of the data, Spearman’s Rho correlation coefficient was adopted to assess the existing relationships between levels of engagement and the established theoretical variables and constructs. Spearman’s correlation is the non-parametric alternative to Pearson’s correlation when the normality assumption is violated. A two-tailed test was opted for. Table 4 below shows the results of the established correlation coefficients.

Table 4. Spearman’s Correlation Coefficients for the Relationships Between Organisational-Based Factors with Engagement

Theoretical Constructs/Factors	Engagement
	r_s
Organisational-based factors	
Nature of work	0.743**
Physical working conditions	0.760**
Leadership	0.819**

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

Source: Compiled by the authors

Table 4 above presents the results of Spearman’s correlation coefficients for the relationships between organisational-based factors with engagement. The engagement had a strong, positive and significant relationship with all the organisational-based factors. Thus, the levels of engagement had a strong, positive and effective relationship with the nature of work ($r_s = 0.743$), physical working conditions ($r_s = 0.760$) and leadership ($r_s = 0.819$). In summary, improved or better nature of work, physical working conditions and leadership results in an increase in the levels of engagement of educators in PFBSs, with leadership having the greater effect among the organisational-based factors. Given this result, the hypothesis on leadership can now be tested.

4.4 Hypothesis Testing and Results. The statistical analysis of this study was conducted under significant testing where we posed a null hypothesis and then attempted to reject that hypothesis (Borenstein, 2021). Thus, the following hypothesis was developed: H_0 : Leadership does not significantly predict educators’ engagement levels in PFBSs.

A structural equation model was examined to determine the underlying predictive effect that the independent variable, which is leadership, has on the n levels of engagement of educators. Figure 3 below shows the resultant path diagram drawn using AMOS for the structural equation model.

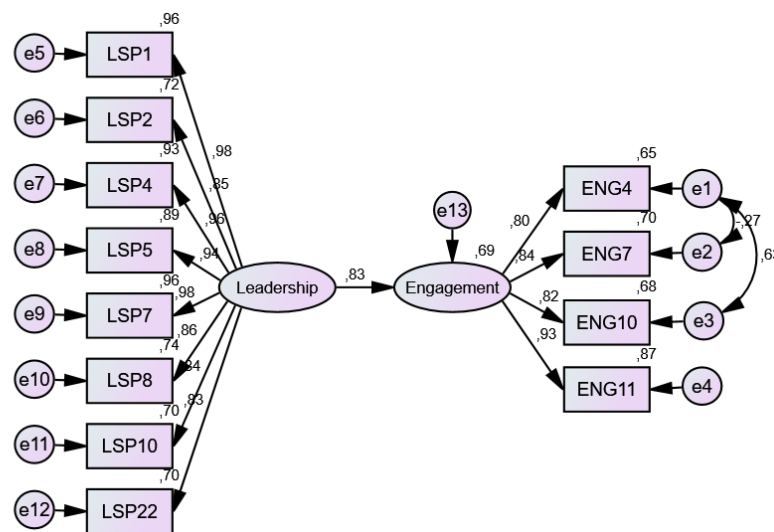


Figure 3. The Path Diagram for the Leadership on Engagement Structural Model

Source: Compiled by the authors

In Figure 3 above, eight items were used to measure the exogenous latent variable, while four items were used to measure the endogenous latent variable. In Table 5 below, the model fit indexes demonstrate that the established structural model is a good fit.

Table 5. The Fitness Indexes Assessment for the Leadership on Engagement Structural Model

Name of index	Index value	Cut-off points	Comments
SRMR	0.052	0.05 < SRMR ≤ 0.09	Acceptable fit
GFI	0.995	≥ 0.95	Good fit
AGFI	0.992	≥ 0.95	Good fit
NFI	0.994	≥ 0.95	Good fit
RFI	0.992	≥ 0.95	Good fit

Note: **SRMR** = The Standardised Root Mean Square Residual. **GFI/AGFI** = The (Adjusted) Goodness of Fit. **NFI** = The (Non) Normed Fit Index. **RFI** = The Relative Fit Index, also known as **RHO1**.

Source: Compiled by the authors

Assessing the respective index values, SRMR is $0.052 < 0.09$, GFI is $0.995 > 0.95$ and AGFI is $0.992 > 0.95$. The normed fit index (NFI = 0.994) is greater than 0.95, while the relative fit index (RFI = 0.992) is above 0.95, which suggests a good model fit for the established structural model. Table 6 below shows the standardised parameter estimates of the regression weights.

Table 6. Scale-Free Least Squares Standardised Estimates and Bootstrapped 90% Bias-Corrected Confidence Intervals for the Regression Weights for the Leadership on Engagement Structural Model

Path			Bootstrap Estimate & SE			90% CI [LL - UL]	p-value
			^b Estimate	SE	Bias		
Engagement	←	Leadership	0.830	0.074	0.004	[0.694 – 0.936]	0.004*
ENG4	←	Engagement	0.804	0.068	-0.005	[0.667 – 0.887]	0.003*
ENG7	←	Engagement	0.837	0.046	0.004	[0.743 – 0.901]	0.005*
ENG10	←	Engagement	0.822	0.047	0.001	[0.728 – 0.883]	0.004*
ENG11	←	Engagement	0.931	0.033	-0.001	[0.871 – 0.981]	0.002*
LSP1	←	Leadership	0.978	0.014	0.000	[0.953 – 0.999]	0.002*
LSP2	←	Leadership	0.846	0.045	-0.003	[0.753 – 0.902]	0.003*
LSP4	←	Leadership	0.963	0.018	0.000	[0.929 – 0.990]	0.003*
LSP5	←	Leadership	0.943	0.030	-0.001	[0.869 – 0.978]	0.006*
LSP7	←	Leadership	0.981	0.015	-0.001	[0.954 – 1.002]	0.002*
LSP8	←	Leadership	0.863	0.040	0.004	[0.781 – 0.917]	0.006*
LSP10	←	Leadership	0.839	0.043	0.002	[0.743 – 0.899]	0.005*
LSP22	←	Leadership	0.835	0.033	0.003	[0.776 – 0.882]	0.004*

Note: (*) Statistically significant effects. (^b) Represents the standardised estimates for the structural model. S.E. and Bias are the standard error and estimated bias for the standardised estimate respectively. Bias-corrected confidence intervals using 1000 replications are presented.

Source: Compiled by the authors

The path beta estimate for the leadership to levels of engagement path is statistically significant ($\beta = 0.830$; SE = 0.074; 90% CI = [0.694 – 0.936]; $p = 0.004$). Thus, the regression weight for leadership in the engagement prediction is significantly different from zero at the 5% significance level. The squared multiple correlations of 0.690 with 90% bias-corrected CI = [0.482 – 0.877] indicates that the structural model explains 69.0% of the variation in levels of engagement (see Table 7 below).

Table 7. Bootstrapped R-Squared (Squared Multiple Correlation) Estimate and 90% Bias-Corrected Confidence Intervals for the Leadership on Engagement Default Structural Model

Estimate	Bootstrap SE		Bootstrapped 90% CI		Effect Size
	SE	Bias	LL	UL	Cohen's f^2
0.690	0.121	0.012	0.482	0.877	2.226

Note: S.E. and Bias are the standard error and estimated bias for the bootstrapped R-Squared (Squared Multiple Correlation) standardised estimate respectively. Bias-corrected confidence

Source: Compiled by the authors

According to Cohen's f^2 , the effect size of 2.226 is greater than 0.35 and is regarded as a significant effect. This result supports the alternative hypothesis since the beta parameter for the leadership-to-engagement path is positive and significant. Therefore, there is sufficient statistical evidence to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that leadership as an organisational-based factor has a statistically significant and positive predictive effect on educators' engagement levels in PFBSs.

Table 8 below presents the summarised results for the hypotheses on the predictive effect of organisational-based factors on the engagement of educators.

Table 8. Summarised Results for the Hypotheses on the Predictive Effect of Organisational-Based Factors on the Engagement of Educators

Description (Null Hypothesis)		Test Statistic	p-value	Decision
H ₀	Nature of work does not significantly predict levels of engagement of educators in PFBSs.	$\beta = 0.524$	$p = 0.005^*$	Reject
H ₀	Physical working conditions does not significantly predict levels of engagement of educators in PFBSs.	$\beta = 0.676$	$p = 0.003^*$	Reject
H ₀	Leadership relationships does not significantly predict levels of engagement of educators in PFBSs.	$\beta = 0.830$	$p = 0.004^*$	Reject

Note: (*) Statistically significant effects at $\alpha = 0.05$. The beta coefficients are standardised estimates of the structural default models.

Source: Compiled by the authors

5. Discussions and Recommendations

5.1 Discussion. Although the main aim of this study was to test the extent to which leadership predicts the levels of engagement of educators in PFBSs, the study tested it under the construct of organisational-based factors which, apart from leadership, involves two other factors, namely, nature of work and physical working conditions. The reason for doing this is that leadership works in conjunction with the other two factors. The discussions that follow hereunder are on the leadership factor.

This study used deductive logic, whereby the researchers commenced with a null hypothesis and then collected data to determine whether or not empirical evidence provided support for the hypotheses (Dube & Shawe, 2022; Manzini & Mhakure, 2022; Ugwuanyi, 2022). It allowed logical analysis and conclusions based on the relationships derived from the related variables. The question to test hypotheses was: *To what extent does leadership predict educators' engagement levels in PFBSs?*

The research problem in this study was solved by answering the research questions. The researchers needed hypotheses to help answer the research questions. Thus, the theory was aligned with the research questions (Payne, 2021). To answer the research question, the researchers engaged a hypothesis to test how the study's independent variables do not predict the dependent variables. Thus, the statistical analysis of this study was conducted under significant testing where we posed a null hypothesis and then attempted to reject that hypothesis (Borenstein, 2021). Based on the above, the following hypothesis was developed and rejected by the findings: H₀: Leadership does not predict educators' engagement levels in PFBSs. This study's analysis concluded that leadership, as an organisational-based factor, has a significant and positive predictive effect on educators' engagement levels in PFBSs. As mentioned earlier, after a CFA was conducted, eight items were loaded on leadership. Some of these factors have been combined, but attempts have been made to discuss them hereunder.

One of the tasks that leaders need to do is to offer collective leadership. Managers realise that a productive staff is essential for organisational survival (Agbionu et al., 2018; Peters, 2019; Siwisa-Damasane, 2020). School management and leadership are two ways of defining an organisation, with management focusing on resource allocation and leadership on mission, direction, and inspiration. A school principal must be both leader and a manager (Marishane & Botha, 2011). Leadership is an intentional power mechanism that guides, empowers, inspires individuals and creates new paths to improve organisations (Vrba, 2022). Organisations know engaged workers boost productivity (Alayoubi et al., 2020). Therefore, leaders must change organisations to meet objectives and grow employees (Ali & Anwar, 2021). In a school, leadership affects school and student results (Leithwood et al., 2006). School leaders should be servant leaders or social architects who empower others by working with teachers to achieve social growth and eliminate transformational challenges in education and society (Van Deventer, 2019).

A second task that leaders need to do is to provide direction. Effective leadership entails defining the business of PFBSs, creating a winning strategy (Ngambi, 2022), respecting others, acting decisively, and behaving with integrity (du Plessis, 2020). This type of leadership is exercised by what are called 'engaging leaders' (Nikolova et al., 2019). These practices include setting direction, developing people, redesigning the organisation, and managing the teaching and learning programme. Leadership styles in family businesses have attracted increasing scholarly attention. It is noted that leadership in family firms differs from that of other firms due to the emotional considerations of family firm leaders, their high levels of influence, and their relatively long tenures (Gomez-Meja et al., 2011). Regardless of the situation, the style and character of a leader's style in an organisation impact the degree of engagement among employees (Aamodt, 2004). In

this study, transformational leadership came out strongly as one that is preferred in PFBSs. Transformational leadership positively relates to work engagement (Borah & Barua, 2018; Chin et al., 2019; Li et al., 2021; Nikolova et al., 2019; Saks, 2017). Transformational leaders convert their followers from low to high levels of enthusiasm. They emphasise collective interest and the achievement of a collective goal by stimulating self-confidence, morale, and motivation and permitting followers to establish a personal and social identification with the organisational objective to foster innovation and obtain innovative outcomes (Liao et al., 2017).

It is noted that success in business management depends on the leader demonstrating certain qualities for effective leadership. These qualities contribute to leadership effectiveness that is interrelated with achieving envisioned results (Nieuwenhuizen, 2019). A complete listing of leadership qualities would consume hundreds of pages (Nieuwenhuizen, 2019). Therefore, leadership qualities such as dominance, emotional stability, high tolerance of frustration, initiative, responsibility, resilience, emotional intelligence, honesty, positive attitude, tenacity, vision, commitment, sense of humour, assertiveness, humility, warmth, self-confidence, and flexibility are the most found qualities related to effective leadership (Henrico & Visser, 2017; Nieuwenhuizen, 2019; Oosthuizen, 2018).

Leaders also need to possess intelligence, work-relevant knowledge, substantial achievement and drive, proactiveness, friendliness, enthusiasm, ability to take risks, creativity, quick action, and eyes on the future (Amos, 2021; de Beer, 2017; Larson & Gray, 2021). Last, leaders in PFBSs should recognise that different people have different gifts and abilities, be prepared to respond to changes in the business environment and understand that families and ownership structures also change over time (Aronoff & Ward, 2000) and obtain innovative outcomes (Liao et al., 2017).

Thus, various studies have developed diverse kinds of employee engagement models. Still, Zinger's (2010) model of employee engagement encourages employees to give opinions in a participative leadership style. According to Zinger (2010), the organisation should communicate effectively to enable workers to share their views. It will allow the employees to be more engaged in their job. Jeevithaa (2016) believes that the essential part of engagement is 'connection' because it explains the workers' commitment by focusing on the strategies followed to create emotional bonding of the employees towards the company. Some authors (Botha, 2022; Ile et al., 2022; Staude, 2021) have written about how a SWOT analysis applies to internal and external environmental investigations. It (a SWOT analysis) combines all the factors that management must deal with in both the internal and external environments. A SWOT analysis combines all the factors that management must deal with in both the internal and external environments. Leaders need to use this analysis to ensure that their organisations thrive.

Last, it can be seen from the above that an organisation's failure to appoint managers with the right attributes undermines efforts to promote educators' engagement (Mabasa, 2018) because members' loyalty within organisations is greatly determined by leadership (Bussin, 2018). Leaders who fail to recognise the link between an engaged workforce and organisational outcomes endanger their organisations (Keyko et al., 2016). Given the previous, this study has shown the significance of leadership in fostering employee engagement because workers contribute significantly to the organisation through their labour. Thus, school leaders should create and shape a learning environment that facilitates the development of the collective capacity of the PFBS. Furthermore, as alerted by Arar and Saiti (2022), they should actively motivate educators, promoting collaboration, desired commitment, norms, values, and fitting work practices. It is now time to look at the study's limitations.

5.2 Recommendations. Enslin (2021) says recommendations are either for further study or for practice. The recommendations below are categorised into those two separate purposes.

5.2.1 Recommendations for Practice. Recommendations are based on results and findings that prescribe what could or should be done (or done differently) in practice (Enslin, 2021).

This study recommends:

- More employee engagement surveys to determine where improvements are needed.
- Leaders need to exercise apt leadership skills to run their organisations efficiently.
- Leaders should allow employees to suggest solutions to problems because they have hands-on organisational experience.

- Management must recognise and develop employees' skills by providing career opportunities to keep them challenged and motivated. Employees should be encouraged to experiment and improve their performances, and functional activities should be used to promote innovation within the organisation.
- Employee engagement initiatives must be led by top management.

6. Conclusion, Limitations, and Future Research

6.1 Conclusion. In connection with the above revelation, an organisation's success depends on treating workers and employee engagement promotes employee loyalty. Sometimes studies are conducted because of researchers' interests (Salkind, 2019). Researchers are influenced by their background, culture, education, and personal experience; our interaction with organisations with low employee engagement levels led to this study. The researchers' careers in organisational matters and participation in training in different organisations led to our realisation of the prevalent exclusion of employees in decision-making by leaders. Based on evidence from previous studies, disengagement levels could be solved through studies such as ours. This study is significant because, as stated earlier, a study that examines employee engagement among educators in PFBSs has never been done at this level in the country. The expectation is that the model will assist managers who deal with educators to create a climate in which their staff are fully engaged. The results of this study are not representative of all PFBSs because the study focused on one aspect of engagement, which is leadership and was confined to PFBSs in the Eastern Cape.

6.2 Limitations. Personal bias may occur in coding or categorising themes. Since conclusions were exclusively drawn from available data, findings are not transferable to similar contexts. Because of time and geographical constraints, this study was conducted on selected PFBSs in Alice, East London, Port Elizabeth, and Mthatha. Thus, findings are confined to these PFBSs.

6.3 Recommendation for Future Studies. Since science thrives on replication (Athanasou et al., 2018), issues of communication, job security, training and development should be undertaken to improve knowledge of the engagement of educators in PFBSs. A mixed-method approach should be used with an employee engagement diagnostic tool to thoroughly investigate employee engagement's impact on PFBSs. A large-scale survey is needed to obtain a fair representation of PFBSs in South Africa.

7. Acknowledgments and Research Funding

The authors want to acknowledge Walter Sisulu University's role in funding this article's page fees. The authors thank the PFBSs that permitted them to collect data from their educators. The authors would also want to thank all the respondents for voluntarily participating in the study.

Author Contributions: Conceptualization: Anthony Kambi Masha, Ernest Nikisi; methodology: Anthony Kambi Masha, Ernest Nikisi; software: Ernest Nikisi; validation: Ernest Nikisi; formal analysis: Ernest Nikisi; investigation: Anthony Kambi Masha; resources: Anthony Kambi Masha, Ernest Nikisi, Patrick Bwowe; data curation: Anthony Kambi Masha, Ernest Nikisi, Patrick Bwowe; writing-original draft preparation: Anthony Kambi Masha; writing-review and editing: Anthony Kambi Masha; visualization: Anthony Kambi Masha, Ernest Nikisi, Patrick Bwowe; supervision: Anthony Kambi Masha, Ernest Nikisi, Patrick Bwowe; project administration: Anthony Kambi Masha, Ernest Nikisi, Patrick Bwowe.

Conflicts of Interest: Authors declare no conflict of interest.

Data Availability Statement: Not applicable.

Informed Consent Statement: Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

List of Abbreviations

PFBS: Private Family Business Schools

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