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Examining the interplay of empowering leadership and employees' job satisfaction in the school context

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ABSTRACT

The study examined how empowering leadership influences employee job satisfaction. It conducted a literature review and established theoretical frameworks to support its focus. Employing a descriptive and correlational research design, the study utilized validated questionnaires to collect data. Analysis involved descriptive and inferential statistics, including weighted mean and Pearson correlation coefficient. Findings revealed a moderate level of empowering leadership and job satisfaction among employees, with a significant correlation between the two. The study acknowledges limitations stemming from a restricted sample size and suggests future research to encompass broader populations and diverse industries.

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Introduction

Attributing leadership for organizational failures is a common reflex, often overshadowing other contributing factors like employee performance or external influences (Nordgren, 2016). This tendency stems from the perception of leaders as the ultimate responsible figures, akin to captains steering a ship (D'Aveni, 1990). Historical examples, such as the Titanic and El Faro disasters, highlight instances where captains faced scrutiny for ignoring warnings and mishandling crises (Ismay & Smith, 1912; Dooley, 2017). Similarly, leadership failures in the Sea Diamond cruise Ship incident underscore negligence and non-compliance with safety protocols (Carassava, 2007).

Leadership significantly impacts organizational dynamics, with challenges often attributed to ineffective leadership (Cherry, 2019). Authoritarian leadership, which may overlook employee input, can lead to dissatisfaction and hinder performance (Wang et al., 2019). Studies also suggest that authoritarian leadership may be linked to psychological contract violations and organizational cynicism (Jiang et al., 2017). Conversely, empowering leadership fosters employee engagement by involving them in decision-making processes (Keller, 1995).

Empowering leadership entails fostering a shared vision, granting autonomy, and delegating authority (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990). This approach enhances intrinsic motivation and organizational productivity. However, despite its importance, there's a gap in research on empowering leadership's impact on job satisfaction in educational settings.

To address this gap, this study assessed the extent of empowering leadership in school organizations and its effect on employee satisfaction. By examining leadership practices, this research seeks to inform improvements in leadership approaches and enhance employee satisfaction. The study will comprise five sections: introduction, literature review, methodology, empirical data and analysis, and discussion and conclusion. Through this investigation, it aims to contribute to the discourse on effective leadership practices and organizational productivity.

Literature Review

A literature review serves as a vital tool for synthesizing ideas and insights from previous research on a given topic (Baumeister & Leary, 1997). It lays the groundwork for the theoretical framework of the current study (Webster & Watson, 2002) and offers a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter (Snyder, 2019). Therefore, this section delves into relevant literature, encompassing studies that have examined theories pertinent to the present investigation.

The theoretical and conceptual background

The Concept of leadership

As highlighted in the introduction, leadership plays a pivotal role in organizational success, with accountability often falling on those at the helm. Bennis and Nanus (2007) assert that effective leadership is the linchpin of organizational effectiveness, as the performance of an organization mirrors the quality of its leadership. Tichy and Cohen (2007) echo this sentiment, emphasizing that leadership is instrumental in achieving victories within an organization. Consequently, leaders must possess a clear understanding of their role to avert potential disasters, as demonstrated by Al Khajeh's (2018) study on leadership styles and organizational performance. His findings underscore the significance of leadership in determining organizational success, particularly through transformational and democratic styles.

Northouse (2015) further elucidates the essence of leadership as a process of influencing others to attain shared objectives, underscoring the indispensable role of effective leadership in organizational triumph. Leaders, as posited by Tichy and Cohen (2007), must not only possess knowledge and skills but also exhibit values, energy, and integrity. Bennis and Nanus (2007) emphasize the importance of character, determination, trust-building, and results orientation in effective leadership, highlighting the multifaceted nature of leadership.

Building upon these insights, we contend that effective leadership necessitates the collaboration and empowerment of followers. Engaging employees in the decision-making process is paramount for creating a culture of success within an organization. Tichy and Cohen (2007) advocate for leadership at all levels, emphasizing the imperative of nurturing leaders throughout the organization. Maxwell (1995) reinforces this notion, asserting that a leader's primary duty is to cultivate leadership within their sphere of influence. Thus, empowerment emerges as the cornerstone of effective leadership, enabling leaders to foster a cadre of capable and empowered individuals at every echelon of the organization.

The Concept of empowerment and empowering leadership

Empowerment, a concept widely discussed by scholars such as Bennis and Nanus (1985, 2007), House (1988), and Neilsen (1986), remains multifaceted in its interpretation. Bennis and Nanus (1985, 2007) delineate a vision of 21st-

century leadership characterized by decentralization of power, dissemination of information, and cultivation of leadership at all levels. House (1988) emphasizes leadership behaviors that foster subordinate empowerment and satisfaction, aiming to enhance motivation and capabilities. Neilsen (1986) underscores the correlation between psychological empowerment and organizational performance, viewing empowerment as the provision of resources to enhance individuals' sense of self-worth.

Despite varying interpretations, common threads emerge in defining empowerment across dictionaries. Merriam-Webster and Cambridge define it as the granting of power or authority, while Collins emphasizes the process of bestowing power and status. In our context, empowerment entails relinquishing control and granting autonomy to employees to carry out their duties independently (Thomas, 1990).

Empowering leadership, therefore, encompasses a paradigm of sharing power to motivate and engage employees (Zhang & Zhou, 2014). This approach nurtures employees' sense of self-worth and fosters commitment to their work (Spreitzer, 1995). Hao et al. (2018) demonstrate the positive correlation between empowering leadership and task performance, creative output, and work passion. Employees thrive when granted autonomy, as evidenced by Chen et al. (2011), who found that empowering leadership encourages cooperative behavior, innovation, and commitment.

Furthermore, empowering leadership catalyzes proactive behavior and continuous improvement in job performance (Humborstad, 2014; Wellins, 1991). Lee et al. (2018) highlight the effectiveness of empowering leaders in fostering creativity, citizenship behavior, and employee trust. Ultimately, empowering leadership emerges as a cornerstone for enhancing organizational performance and fostering a culture of innovation and engagement among employees.

Element of empowerment

Based on the meaning of leadership and the concept of empowerment and the concept of empowering leadership that we have discussed, now we can identify from there on the elements of empowerment.

Vision-Mission-Oriented Empowerment. At the core of effective leadership and empowerment lies the establishment of a clear vision and mission. These foundational elements serve as guiding principles, directing decision-making processes and informing job performance. When employees comprehend and internalize the organization's vision and mission, the need for strict and autocratic leadership diminishes, as these guiding principles inherently steer their actions (Morato, 2006). Involving employees in crafting the vision and mission fosters a sense of ownership and commitment, transforming it into a collective aspiration rather than solely the leader's prerogative.

A collective vision and mission pave the way for the delegation of authority, enabling leaders to entrust decision-making to those best positioned to achieve optimal outcomes. This delegation of authority is facilitated by a well-defined vision and mission, which streamline operations and mitigate the need for extensive oversight and micromanagement (Searle, Hayes & Weiss, 2018). With a shared understanding of the organization's objectives, employees are equipped to navigate their roles effectively, knowing what is expected of them and how their contributions contribute to the overarching vision.

Ultimately, a cohesive vision and mission not only empower employees but also empower leaders to focus their efforts on strategic initiatives rather than day-to-day operational control. By aligning actions with the organizational vision and mission, both leaders and employees can work synergistically towards common goals, fostering a culture of collaboration and achievement.

Independence or Autonomy. Independence or autonomy is a concept rooted in self-governance and freedom of will. Derived from the Greek roots "autos," meaning self, and "nomos," denoting rule or law, autonomy embodies self-determination and individuality (Agich, 1993, 1994). At its core, autonomy entails freedom from external interference, empowering individuals to govern themselves in their duties and responsibilities (Dryden, n.d).

In the context of this paper, autonomy signifies the capacity for individuals to make decisions without external coercion or influence. It grants individuals the autonomy of action and thought, allowing them to shape their work according to their own judgment. Saragih (2011) highlights the significant relationship between job autonomy, job satisfaction, and job performance, indicating that autonomy fosters satisfaction and enhances performance. Similarly, Morgeson et al. (2005) corroborates these findings, demonstrating the positive impact of job autonomy on employee satisfaction and performance.

By affording employees autonomy in their roles, organizations empower individuals to take ownership of their work and contribute meaningfully to organizational objectives. This autonomy not only enhances job satisfaction and performance but also cultivates a sense of responsibility and accountability among employees, driving organizational success.

Delegation of Authority. Delegation of authority serves as a vital mechanism for effective leadership, allowing leaders to distribute responsibilities and decision-making power among subordinates. Abun (2018) aptly notes that leaders cannot be omnipotent and must delegate authority to others to manage the myriad issues they face. Bennis and Nanus (2007) define delegation as the downward division of authority and power, wherein leaders entrust subordinates with decision-making tasks. This delegation not only relieves leaders of burdens but also empowers employees, imbuing their contributions with significance (Abun, 2018).

Kokemuller (2007) further elucidates delegation as the assignment of tasks to workers along with guidelines for their execution. However, delegation is not merely offloading tasks; it entails transferring responsibility while maintaining accountability (Bennis and Nanus, 2007). The delegated individual possesses the authority to allocate resources, make decisions, and oversee tasks, yet they remain bound by specific guidelines and expectations set by the leader (Abun, 2018). This delineation of authority, responsibility, and accountability ensures that delegated tasks are carried out in alignment with the leader's objectives.

Al-Jammal and Al-Khasawneh's (2015) study underscores the significant impact of delegation on employee job performance, highlighting its role in enhancing organizational effectiveness. By empowering employees through delegation, leaders foster a culture of trust, autonomy, and accountability, thereby driving overall performance and success.

Individual Goal-Oriented empowerment. Empowerment entails more than just granting authority and power to subordinates; its purpose lies in enabling individuals to make decisions and take actions that contribute to the organization's common goal. This common goal must be cascaded down to departments, units, and individual employees, ensuring alignment throughout the organization (Stavrou et al., 2015).

Individual goal theory posits that assigning individual goals influences how departments and individuals operate, shaping their thoughts, feelings, and actions (Stavrou et al., 2015). Goal orientation, also known as task-driven or result-driven behavior, directs efforts toward achieving specific objectives, driving behavior toward success (Ordóñez et al., 2009). Individual goals serve as intrinsic motivators, inspiring employees to unleash their capabilities and achieve assigned tasks (Ordóñez et al., 2009).

Furthermore, Borlongan-Conway et al. (2010) demonstrate a positive correlation between goal orientation and creative performance, underscoring the role of individual goals in fostering innovation and productivity. By aligning individual goals with organizational objectives, leaders empower employees to drive success and contribute meaningfully to the organization's mission and vision.

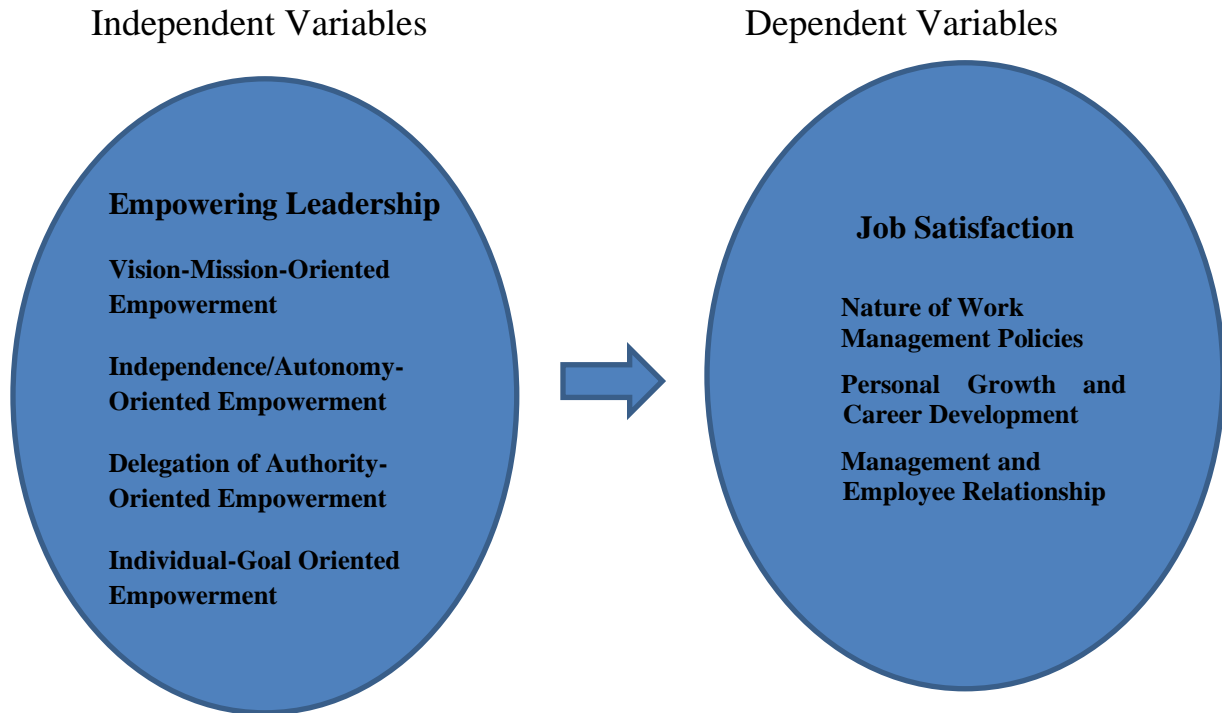
Leadership styles and job satisfaction

Discussion on job satisfaction is still very important because it is one of the management concerns that should not be neglected. Organizational performance and individual performance are interrelated. Job satisfaction has been argued as a reflection of employees' contentment over the environment or their work and the supervision of their work (Spector, 1997). Or Sharma and Bhaskar (1991) argued that job satisfaction is an emotional state felt after experiencing the job. It is what one feels after one encounter the job. Feeling of satisfaction or dissatisfaction occurs when the employees experience a discrepancy between what they want from the job and what they experience in reality. It is a feeling felt after one's needs are fulfilled or when their expectations or desires are met (Ali, 2016). Therefore, measuring their job satisfaction is important to determine if they are happy or not happy with their work. It is important to measure to what extent employees are happy or not happy or satisfied or dissatisfied with their job. This is one of the core issues of the organization because neglecting such an issue would mean the downfall of the organization because employees are considered the most important assets of an organization. This is the reason why employees stay and go (Flowers & Hughes, 1973).

Studies have shown the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational performance. Brayfield & Crockett, (1955) had already studied the correlation between the two variables. Their study had already pointed out the role of job satisfaction in organizational performance. Later studies also support the early study on the influence of job satisfaction on organizational performance. For example, Bakotic (2016), Ouedraogo, and Leclerc (2013) conducted a study on job satisfaction and organizational performance and the result indicated that the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational performance is stronger than the connection between organizational performance and job satisfaction. These studies were confirmed further by a later study by Miah (2018) on the impact of employees' job satisfaction and organizational performance on the private sector. Without further narrating many studies on this particular concern, it is believed that job satisfaction is a crucial issue in managing an organization.

Job satisfaction is not just caused by the job or the work alone or by unfulfilled needs such as physiological and psychological needs but it is also caused by leadership styles. Different leadership styles cause different levels of job satisfaction as pointed out by Medley & Larochelle, (1995) and Haider, and Riaz (2010) that job satisfaction is more dependent on transformational and transactional leadership styles. Empowering leadership is one of the leadership styles that can increase job satisfaction and job performance as indicated by the study of Fuller, et.al (1999). A similar study and result were also pointed out by Furlonger (2000) on the influence of leadership empowerment on job satisfaction. Job satisfaction as a result of empowering leadership may include the ***work itself, management policies, personal growth and career development, management, and employee relationship, and empowerment*** (Dhamija, et.al., 2018). Satisfaction can be drawn ***from the work itself*** if the work is suitable for the employees and capable of doing it and has the necessary information for doing the work, gives new knowledge and skills, enhances dignity and respect, realizes employee's expectations, allows employees' creativity and appreciates employees' ideas and efforts. Satisfaction can also be a result ***of management policies***. In this case, the employees are satisfied when policies are resulting in a conducive work environment, oriented toward organizational development and employees' welfare, promoting career opportunities and growth, encouraging a learning climate, enhancing trust and openness between management and employees, and providing regular discussion on organizational efficiency. Job satisfaction is also correlated to ***personal growth and career development***. There is a need for management to provide schemes or policies for personal growth and development and communicates those policies to the employees, conduct activities that enhance employees' development, involve the employees in decision making, show interest in employees' development and encourage employees to acquire new skills. Satisfaction can also be the output of ***management and employee relationship***. In the sense that there is regular communication between management and employees related to HRM policies, permission given to the employees to participate in decision making, communication of vision and mission to the employees and the objectives of the organization, and coordination between the management and HR department.

Conceptual Framework



Source: Bennis and Nanus (1985, 2007; Searle, Hayes & Weiss, 2018; Saragih, 2011; Abun, 2018; Kokemuller, 2007; Borlongan-Conway, et.al., 2010; Dhamija, et.al., 2018)

Figure1: Independent and dependent variables describe the influence of independent variables toward the dependent variable. In the sense that when the experimenter manipulates the independent variables, it may affect the dependent variable (McLeod, 2019). In this regard, the conceptual frameworks reflect the theory of the study. It depicts the correlation between the two variables in which empowering leadership affects job satisfaction.

Statement of the problem

As reflected in the conceptual framework, the study found out the correlation between empowering leadership and job satisfaction. It specifically answered the following questions:

1. What is the empowering leadership style of the College Administrators in terms of:
 - 1.1. vision-oriented empowerment;
 - 1.2. independence/autonomy empowerment;
 - 1.3. delegation of authority empowerment, and
 - 1.4. individual goal-oriented empowerment?
2. What is the job satisfaction of employees in terms of:
 - 2.1. the nature of work;
 - 2.2. management policies;
 - 2.3. personal growth and development, and
 - 2.4. management and employees relationship?

3. Is there a relationship between empowering leadership and job satisfaction?

Assumption of the study

The study operates under the premise that empowering leadership indeed influences employee job satisfaction. Additionally, it assumes the feasibility of measuring both empowering leadership and job satisfaction, relying on valid questionnaires and objective responses to gauge these constructs.

Hypothesis

Previous research by Haider and Riaz (2010) and Furlonger (2000) has identified a correlation between empowering leadership and employee job satisfaction. Building on this foundation, the current study hypothesizes a similar correlation between empowering leadership style and employee job satisfaction.

Scope and delimitation of the study

The study limits its investigation on the relationship between empowering leadership styles along with vision-oriented empowerment, independence/autonomy, a delegation of authority, and individual-goal-oriented empowerment. The study covers only the employees of a Catholic College in Ilocos Norte. The study limits its investigation only to the variables identified in this study.

Research methodology

Research methodology encompasses the systematic procedures employed in a study, crucial for ensuring its scientific rigor and credibility (Leedy, 1974). To uphold quality and validity, research must adhere to appropriate procedures and methodologies throughout its investigation. This entails selecting a suitable research design, specifying the study's locale and population, outlining data collection procedures and instruments, and employing appropriate statistical tools for data analysis. These components collectively contribute to the integrity and reliability of the research findings.

Research design

This research adopts a quantitative approach, employing both descriptive assessment and descriptive correlational research design. Descriptive research, as defined by Baht (2020), focuses on portraying the characteristics of the population or phenomena under investigation, prioritizing the "what" over the "why" of the research subject. This design enables the examination of empowering leadership styles among office heads or managers and their impact on employee job satisfaction. As articulated by Ariola (2006) and cited by Abun (2019), descriptive research aims to elucidate patterns within collected data through questionnaires and statistical analysis. It serves to delineate profiles, frequency distributions, and characteristics of individuals, situations, phenomena, or relationship variables, essentially depicting "what is" evident in the data.

In line with the objectives of the current study, a descriptive correlational method is employed. This approach facilitates the exploration of moral leadership levels and their influence on employee morality, establishing associations between variables of interest.

The Locale of the Study

The study was conducted at a Catholic College situated in Ilocos Norte, a province adjacent to Ilocos Sur in the northern region of Luzon Island, Philippines.

Population

The study encompassed all administrators and employees of the College. Utilizing total enumeration sampling, 130 employees, including heads, were selected as respondents.

Data Gathering instruments

Questionnaires were employed for data collection. The researcher designed the questionnaires on empowering leadership styles, which underwent content validation by subject matter experts with over 15 years of leadership experience and PhDs in educational management. Additionally, questionnaires on job satisfaction were adapted from Dhamija et al.'s (2018) Quality of Work-Life Factors.

Data gathering procedures

Adherence to proper procedures is paramount to ensure ethical data collection. The researcher initiated the process by sending formal letters to the College Presidents, seeking permission to distribute the questionnaires. Subsequently, the researcher personally met with the Presidents and employees to administer the questionnaires. The retrieval of completed questionnaires was facilitated through arrangements made between the Presidents' representatives and the researcher, with assistance from college employees and faculty.

Statistical treatment of data

Given the descriptive nature of the research, both descriptive and inferential statistics were employed. Descriptive statistics, specifically weighted mean, were utilized to assess the perceived levels of various empowering leadership styles among administrators and employee job satisfaction. Inferential statistics, such as Pearson r correlation analysis, were employed to examine the relationship between empowering leadership styles and employee job satisfaction.

The following range of values with their descriptive interpretation was used:

<i>Statistical Range</i>	<i>Descriptive Interpretation</i>
4.21-5.00	<i>Strongly Agree/Very High</i>
3.41-4.20	<i>Agree/High</i>
2.61-3.40	<i>Somewhat Agree/Moderate</i>
1.81-2.60	<i>Disagree/Low</i>
1.00-1.80	<i>Strongly Disagree/Very Low</i>

Data presentation and analysis

This part presents the data gathered through questionnaires. The presentation follows the structure of the statement of the problems.

Problem 1: What is the empowering leadership style of the College administrators in terms of:

- 1.1. vision-oriented empowerment**
- 1.2. independence/autonomy**
- 1.3. delegation of authority**
- 1.4. individual goal-oriented empowerment**

Table 1. Empowering Leadership Style of the College Administrators in terms of the Vision

<i>Indicators</i>	Mean	DR
1. Employees are invited and involved in creating the vision and mission of the organization.	2.94	SWA
2. The vision and mission of the institution are clear to the employees.	3.04	SWA
3. There is a communication of vision and mission to all employees.	3.05	SWA
4. There is a disclosure of strategy to achieve the vision and mission.	2.92	SWA
5. Constant update of the attainment of vision and mission to the employees.	2.83	SWA
6. Encourage employees to initiate activities in line with the vision-mission.	2.96	SWA
7. Employees are allowed to make their decisions based on the vision and mission.	2.95	SWA
8. There is a regular assessment of the work together with the employees in line with the vision and mission.	2.92	SWA
Composite Mean	2.95	SWA

Source: Bennis and Nanus (1985, 2007); Searle, Hayes & Weiss, (2018)

Legend:

<i>Statistical Range</i>	<i>Descriptive Interpretation</i>
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
1.00-1.80	Strongly Disagree/Very Low

The data analysis indicates that the empowering leadership style exhibited by the heads of the College, particularly concerning the formulation and communication of the institution's vision, yields a composite mean of 2.95. This value falls within the range interpreted as "somewhat agree or moderate." Essentially, it suggests a moderate level of empowerment within the leadership approach. Moreover, breaking down the components individually, each aspect aligns closely with this moderate interpretation.

Employees' involvement in crafting the vision and mission, clarity of these objectives, communication strategies, and even the encouragement for employee initiatives all hover around the moderate range. Notably, the mean ratings reflect a lack of substantial effort from the heads in actively engaging employees in shaping and internalizing the organizational vision and mission.

Such findings underscore a disconnect between the leadership's vision and the perceptions and involvement of the employees. This misalignment can potentially undermine both employee satisfaction and organizational efficiency. Lavoie (2017) highlights the detrimental impact of such disparities on organizational dynamics. Additionally, Mahmood and Rehman (2015) emphasize the link between clarity of organizational direction and employee motivation, suggesting that when employees cannot clearly discern the organization's trajectory, their job satisfaction may suffer.

In essence, the data paints a picture of a leadership style that falls short of fully empowering employees in shaping the organization's vision. This gap not only affects employee morale and engagement but also potentially compromises the overall effectiveness of the institution.

Table 2. Empowering leadership Style of heads of the College in terms of Independence/Autonomy

<i>Indicators</i>	Mean	DR
1. The management allows the employees to perform their work on their own based on what they know best.	3.05	SWA
2. The management encourages self-thinking and creativity at work.	3.02	SWA
3. The management does not intervene too much in the work of employees.	3.02	SWA
4. The management motivates employees to determine or govern themselves.	2.95	SWA
5. The employees are allowed to make their own decisions.	2.95	SWA
6. The management appreciates ideas and recognizes employees' efforts.	2.91	SWA
7. The employees are given easy access to the institution's resources to perform their job.	2.98	SWA
8. The management minimizes supervision and control of the work of employees.	3.03	SWA
Composite Mean	2.99	SWA

Source: Bennis and Nanus (1985, 2007); Searle, Hayes & Weiss, (2018)

The analysis extends to the realm of independence or autonomy within the leadership dynamics of the College. The data reveals a composite mean of 2.99, indicating a level of "somewhat agree or moderate extent" regarding the empowering leadership's approach to autonomy. This suggests a balanced stance where autonomy is neither overly restricted nor excessively granted, falling within a moderate range.

Similarly, when examining individual components, each aspect aligns with this moderate interpretation. Whether it is allowing employees to work independently, encouraging creativity, minimizing intervention, or providing resources, all facets hover around the moderate range of agreement.

However, the mean rating indicates that there is room for improvement in empowering employees' autonomy and independence in their roles. This lack of pronounced empowerment may inhibit employees from fully exercising their potential and contributing optimally to the organization. Harris (2019) highlights the negative consequences of restricted autonomy, linking it to decreased performance and potentially reduced employee satisfaction.

In essence, while the leadership demonstrates a moderate level of empowerment in terms of autonomy, there's a need to enhance this aspect to ensure employees can operate more independently and effectively fulfill their duties and responsibilities.

Table 3. Empowering leadership style of heads of the college in terms of delegation of authority

<i>Indicators</i>	Mean	DR
1. Employees are given the authority to arrange their work.	3.08	SWA
2. Employees are given the authority to accomplish the assigned task.	3.15	SWA
3. Employees are given the authority to decide on the execution of their work.	3.02	SWA
4. Employees are given the authority to make decisions.	2.96	SWA
5. When the employees are delegated to do a certain task, they are given easy access to the resources needed to accomplish the task.	3.01	SWA
6. When the employees are delegated to do a certain task, they are given guidelines on how to perform their task.	3.05	SWA
7. The delegated person is aware of the limits of his/her authority.	3.05	SWA
8. The delegated person knows that he/she is accountable to the person who gives him/her the authority.	3.00	SWA

Composite Mean	3.04	SWA
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Source: Bennis and Nanus (1985, 2007); Searle, Hayes & Weiss, (2018)

The data analysis extends to the domain of delegation of authority within the leadership structure of the College. The findings reveal a composite mean of 3.04, indicating a level of "somewhat agree/moderate extent" regarding the empowering leadership's approach to delegation. This suggests a balanced stance where authority is neither excessively centralized nor overly decentralized but falls within a moderate range.

Examining individual components, each aspect aligns with this moderate interpretation. Whether it is giving employees authority to arrange their work, accomplish tasks, or make decisions, all facets hover around the moderate range of agreement.

However, the mean rating implies that there is potential for improvement in delegating authority to employees. The data suggests that the heads have not been highly proactive in entrusting their employees with authority to carry out their duties and make decisions. This lack of pronounced delegation may hinder employee empowerment and decision-making efficiency.

Corporate Finance Institute (2021) points out the advantages and disadvantages of centralization, highlighting that while it can offer benefits like clear command chains and focused vision, excessive centralization can lead to bureaucratic leadership and slower decision-making processes. Conversely, Sotrin (2017) emphasizes the importance of effective delegation in leadership, suggesting that leaders should transition from doing tasks themselves to leading and empowering their subordinates.

In essence, while the leadership demonstrates a moderate level of delegation, there is a call to enhance this aspect to foster greater employee autonomy and decision-making capability, ultimately leading to improved organizational efficiency and employee loyalty.

Table 4. Empowering leadership style of college administration in terms of individual goal

<i>Indicators</i>	Mean	DR
1. The individual employee is given a specific goal to accomplish.	3.14	SWA
2. The goals that are given to the employees are clearly defined.	3.08	SWA
3. Specific key result areas to be accomplished are identified.	3.09	SWA
4. The goals to be accomplished by the employees are determined by a certain percentage of accomplishment.	3.02	SWA
5. Employees are evaluated based on what they have accomplished.	3.05	SWA
6. Performance evaluation is based on the task given to the employees to accomplish the goal.	3.05	SWA
7. The performers are recognized and rewarded.	2.92	SWA
8. There are awarding ceremonies to recognize employees who are performing excellently in their job.	2.92	SWA
Composite Mean	3.03	SWA

Source: Bennis and Nanus (1985, 2007); Searle, Hayes & Weiss, (2018)

The data sheds light on the empowerment strategy of individual goal-setting within the leadership paradigm of the College. With a composite mean of 3.03, the evaluation indicates a stance of "somewhat agree or moderate extent" regarding the heads' approach to assigning individual goals to employees. This suggests a balanced approach where goal-setting is neither overly rigid nor entirely hands-off, falling within a moderate range.

Upon dissecting the components, each facet aligns with this moderate interpretation. Whether it pertains to goal specificity, clarity in definitions, or alignment with performance evaluation, all aspects hover around the moderate range of agreement.

However, the mean rating suggests a need for improvement in empowering employees through individual goal-setting. The data indicates a lack of proactive clarity in goal assignment and a deficiency in effectively recognizing exceptional performance.

Undoubtedly, assigning specific goals furnishes employees with the autonomy vital for excelling in their roles. However, it's imperative that these objectives harmonize with broader organizational goals and undergo diligent progress monitoring (Gallo, 2011).

Table 5. Summary of empowering leadership style of the college administration

ITEMS	Mean	DR
1. Vision – Mission Oriented Empowerment	2.95	SWA
2. Independence/ Autonomy- Oriented empowerment	2.99	SWA
3. Delegation of Authority – Oriented empowerment	3.04	SWA
4. Individual goal-oriented empowerment	3.03	SWA
Overall Mean	3.00	SWA

Source: Bennis and Nanus (1985, 2007); Searle, Hayes & Weiss, (2018)

The summary table presents an overview of the empowering leadership style exhibited by heads within the college setting. With a composite mean of 3.00, the interpretation falls under "somewhat agree or moderate extent," indicating a balanced approach. This suggests that while the empowering leadership style is not exceptionally high, it also isn't notably low, but rather moderate in its extent.

Individually, when considering variables such as vision-mission orientation, independence/autonomy, delegation of authority, and individual goal-setting, each aspect aligns with the overarching interpretation of "somewhat agree or moderate extent." These ratings collectively indicate that the heads of the college have not been highly effective in empowering their employees across these four dimensions.

This lack of empowerment is evidenced by employees not being sufficiently guided by the organization's vision and mission, lacking autonomy in their roles, having limited authority to make decisions independently, and a dearth of assigned individual goals. Research has shown that empowerment correlates with improved performance, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction among employees (Lee, et al., 2018).

In essence, the findings underscore the importance of enhancing empowerment strategies within the leadership framework of the college to foster employee satisfaction, commitment, and performance.

Problem 2: What is the job satisfaction of employees in terms of

- 2.1. nature of work***
- 2.2. management policies***
- 2.3. personal growth and development***
- 2.4. management and employee's relationship***

Table 6. The job satisfaction of employees in terms of the nature of work

<i>Indicators</i>	Mean	DR
1. I am interested in my work and the work is suitable for my background	3.73	A
2. The work improves my skills and knowledge	3.82	A
3. I can do the best for my work	3.82	A
4. Through the work, I can realize my aspirations	3.68	A
5. I have been provided the required information to perform my work	3.56	A
6. The management encourages self-thinking while at work	3.47	A
7. The work matches my experience, skills, and my physical ability.	3.66	A
8. The management gives importance to my ideas to do my work better.	3.50	A
9. Updates employees with new information about the organization.	3.45	A
10. The management respects my efforts and my initiatives.	3.46	A
Composite Mean	3.62	A

Source: Dhamija, et.al., (2018).

According to the data presented in the table, the overall job satisfaction of employees regarding the nature of their work yields a composite mean of 3.62, interpreted as "agree or high." This suggests that while the level of job satisfaction isn't exceptionally high, it is notably high and surpasses a moderate level. When examining individual indicators, each fall within the same range of interpretation, affirming the overall assessment of "agree or high."

Specifically, employee’s express satisfaction in various aspects of their work, including its alignment with their background, the opportunity for skill and knowledge enhancement, and the fulfillment of personal aspirations. Additionally, they appreciate having the necessary information, being encouraged to think independently, and feeling respected for their contributions.

These findings highlight the significant factors contributing to employees' high job satisfaction, including the intrinsic aspects of the work itself and the supportive treatment received from management. Research by Abdulkhalik & Mohammadali (2019), Fadlallh (2015), Khan et al. (2012), Ezeanyim et al. (2019), and Okeke (2020) supports the notion that job satisfaction positively correlates with job performance.

In summary, the data underscores the importance of understanding and nurturing factors that contribute to employee job satisfaction, as they ultimately impact organizational performance and employee well-being.

Table 7. The job satisfaction of employees in terms of management policies

<i>Indicators</i>	Mean	DR
1. The policies of the management create a conducive work environment.	3.30	SWA
2. Policies promote organizational development	3.28	SWA
3. Policies promote employees’ welfare	3.18	SWA
4. Policies promote growth and career opportunities.	3.15	SWA
5. Management policies aim at practicing rigorous HR practices.	3.18	SWA
6. Policies encourage a learning climate for the employees.	3.18	SWA
7. Policies promote individual efficiency.	3.15	SWA
8. Policies consider overall organizational efficiency.	3.15	SWA
9. The management policies assist to improve employees' productivity.	3.14	SWA
10. Policies promote open communication between the management and employees.	2.95	SWA

Composite Mean	3.17	SWA
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Source: Dhamija, et.al., (2018).

The data underscores the pivotal role of supportive management policies and a conducive working environment in organizational management. Across various management policy dimensions, employees' job satisfaction garnered a composite mean of 3.17, indicating a stance of "somewhat agree or moderate extent." This suggests that while satisfaction with management policies isn't exceptionally high, it also isn't notably low, but rather falls within a moderate range.

Individually, when assessing specific policy aspects such as promoting a conducive work environment, organizational development, employees' welfare, and career opportunities, each falls within the same moderate range of interpretation. This indicates a general trend of moderate satisfaction across various policy domains.

However, the data suggests that employees are not highly satisfied with management policies, particularly regarding the creation of a conducive work environment, organizational development, welfare, career opportunities, learning climate, efficiency, productivity improvement assistance, and open communication. Mamoni (2018) argued that management plays a crucial role in fostering a work environment conducive to happiness and productivity. Poor HR policies, on the other hand, can lead to dissatisfaction, reduced productivity, high turnover rates, and increased costs.

In essence, the findings underscore the importance of management in shaping employee satisfaction through effective policy implementation, which ultimately impacts organizational performance and employee well-being.

Table 8. The job satisfaction of employees in terms of personal growth and development

<i>Indicators</i>	Mean	DR
1. There is the availability of schemes for personal growth and development.	3.59	A
2. There is a communication provided for the employees related to policies on personal growth and development	3.60	A
3. There are activities or programs provided for personal growth and development.	3.54	A
4. There is a rotation of work or job to learn new skills.	3.60	A
5. The management provides seminar and workshops for employees' development	3.62	A
6. There is employee involvement in the decision-making process	3.55	A
7. Opportunities provided for feedbacks and counseling facilities	3.54	A
8. There is an interest shown by the management in the development and growth of their subordinates.	3.50	A
Composite Mean	3.57	A

Source: Dhamija, et.al., (2018).

The relationship between organizational growth and employees' personal development is intertwined (Dobrai et al., 2014). Analysis of gathered data reveals that, overall, employee's express satisfaction with their personal growth and development, attaining a composite mean of 3.57, interpreted as "agree or high." This suggests that while satisfaction isn't exceptionally high, it is notably positive and surpasses a moderate level.

Individually, when considering various aspects such as availability of development schemes, communication regarding development policies, training activities, job rotation, seminars, involvement in decision-making, feedback mechanisms, and management's interest in employee growth, each aspect falls within the "agree or high" range of interpretation. This indicates a consistent trend of positive satisfaction across different facets of personal growth and development.

The findings underscore that employees are highly satisfied with their personal growth and development opportunities provided by the management. These opportunities include schemes, communication channels, training activities, job rotation, seminars, involvement in decision-making, feedback mechanisms, and evident management interest in employee development.

Research by Hameed and Waheed (2011) corroborates the importance of employee development in driving organizational performance and recommends management investment in this area. In essence, the findings highlight the symbiotic relationship between employee development and organizational success, emphasizing the significance of nurturing personal growth and development opportunities within the organizational framework.

Table 9. The job satisfaction of employees in terms of management and employees relationship

<i>Indicators</i>	Mean	DR
1. There is regular communication with the employees related to HRM policies.	2.98	SWA
2. Employees are allowed to participate in the discussion of HRM policies.	2.92	SWA
3. There is a communication of vision and mission to all employees.	3.02	SWA
4. There is a communication to employees concerning the social objectives of the institution	3.00	SWA
5. There is a disclosure of strategy to achieve the organizational goals.	2.92	SWA
6. Maintenance of communication network within the organization.	3.01	SWA
7. There is an implementation of employees' development plans.	3.05	SWA
8. There is coordination between the management and HR department.	2.94	SWA
9. There is cooperation between management and employees.	3.01	SWA
10. There is a good working relationship between management and employees.	2.94	SWA
Composite Mean	2.98	SWA

Source: Dhamija, et.al., (2018).

A robust relationship between employees and management stands as a cornerstone for organizational success (Greer, 2020). Assessing the dynamics of this relationship reveals a composite mean of 2.98, indicating a sentiment ranging between "somewhat agree" and "moderate extent". This suggests that while employees' job satisfaction concerning management-employee relations is not exceedingly high, it also doesn't plummet to low levels, settling instead at a moderate level. Even when individual facets are examined, they consistently align within this moderate spectrum, as evidenced by ratings such as: providing regular communication regarding HRM policies (2.98), engaging employees in HRM policy discussions (2.92), articulating the organizational vision and mission (3.02), conveying social objectives to employees (3.00), disclosing strategies for achieving organizational goals (2.92), maintaining internal communication networks (3.01), executing employee development plans (3.05), fostering coordination between HR and management (2.94), fostering cooperation between management and employees (3.01), and cultivating a healthy working relationship between management and employees (2.94).

These findings collectively indicate that employees, as a whole, do not exhibit markedly high levels of satisfaction with the management-employee relationship. The moderate satisfaction level underscores areas where management may enhance its efforts, particularly in providing regular communication on policy matters, involving employees in decision-making processes, articulating the organization's vision and mission, maintaining robust internal communication channels, and implementing comprehensive employee development plans. Craig (2017) posits that a robust employee-employer relationship is pivotal for organizational success and advocates for management to invest in fostering employee networks and loyalty (Craig, 2017).

Table 10. Summary of Job Satisfaction of Employees

ITEMS	Mean	DR
1. The nature of work	3.62	A
2. Management policies	3.17	SWA
3. Personal growth and development	3.57	A
4. Management and employees' relationship	2.98	SWA
Overall Mean	3.33	SWA

Source: Dhamija, et.al., (2018).

The summary table illustrates that employees' overall job satisfaction attained a composite mean of 3.33, indicating a sentiment leaning towards "somewhat agree". This suggests that while employees' job satisfaction isn't exceptionally high, it also doesn't plummet to low levels, settling instead at a moderate level. Examining individual facets, employees express high satisfaction levels regarding the nature of their work (3.62) and their personal growth and development opportunities (3.57), whereas they exhibit moderate satisfaction levels regarding management policies (3.17) and the relationship between management and employees (2.98).

These findings indicate that, overall, employees' job satisfaction falls within a moderate range. This underscores the need for management to enhance various aspects of the workplace, including improving the nature of work, refining policies, fostering personal growth and development, and cultivating a working environment conducive to positive employee-employer relationships. Numerous studies have highlighted the detrimental effects of job dissatisfaction on organizational success, as evidenced by research conducted by Nwobia and Aljohani (2017), Shaikh et al. (2019), and Henne and Lock (1985).

Problem3: Is there a relationship between empowering leadership and job satisfaction?

Table 11. Relationship between empowering leadership and job satisfaction.

		Nature of Work	Management Policies	Personnel growth and development	Management and employee's relationship	Job Satisfaction - As a Whole
Vision – Mission Oriented Empowerment	Pearson Correlation	.459**	.654**	.806**	.793**	.796**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	130	130	130	130	130
Independence/ Autonomy-Oriented empowerment	Pearson Correlation	.620**	.748**	.748**	.590**	.791**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	130	130	130	130	130
Delegation of Authority – Oriented empowerment	Pearson Correlation	.608**	.589**	.638**	.505**	.685**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	130	130	130	130	130
Individual goal-oriented empowerment	Pearson Correlation	.120	.124	.177*	.182*	.178*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.174	.161	.044	.039	.043
	N	130	130	130	130	130
Empowering Leadership - As a Whole	Pearson Correlation	.576**	.672**	.754**	.658**	.779**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	130	130	130	130	130

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

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

The table on the Pearson r correlation reveals that as a whole there is a significant correlation at 0.01 level(2-tailed) between empowering leadership styles and employees' job satisfaction.

Analyzing the variables individually reveals a notable correlation, significant at both the 0.01 and 0.05 levels (2-tailed). This correlation underscores the link between empowering leadership styles—such as vision-mission oriented empowerment, independence/autonomy-oriented empowerment, delegation of authority-oriented empowerment, and individual goal-oriented empowerment—and various aspects of job satisfaction, including the nature of work, management policies, personal growth and development, as well as management and employee relationships. This indicates that initiatives aimed at enhancing employee job satisfaction cannot be divorced from efforts to empower them.

Result and discussion

The study aimed to investigate the impact of empowering leadership on employee job satisfaction. The findings revealed a significant relationship between empowering leadership and employees' job satisfaction. This underscores the notion that enhancing job satisfaction goes beyond monetary rewards and recognition; it also involves empowerment. Employees derive satisfaction when they are trusted and empowered to take initiative. This empowerment entails management sharing the organization's vision and mission with employees, allowing them to take ownership and execute tasks aligned with these guiding principles autonomously. Thus, alongside ownership of the vision and mission, autonomy plays a crucial role, wherein management entrusts employees to work independently without stringent supervision.

Autonomy and independence are pivotal aspects, as they signify the trust management places in their subordinates to execute tasks effectively. Delegation of authority, as defined by L.A. Allen and cited by Vaishnavi (2019), involves sharing responsibility with employees so that managers can focus on other tasks efficiently. This delegation signifies the manager's trust in their subordinates' capabilities. Research indicates that delegation positively impacts effectiveness, efficiency, and performance (Hammadat et al., 2015).

Additionally, empowering employees can be achieved by assigning specific goals for them to accomplish. These goals should be measurable and serve as the standard for evaluating employee performance. Studies have demonstrated the positive effects of management by objectives and performance evaluations based on accomplished objectives, leading to increased employee satisfaction (Rahman & Islam, 2010).

The study's findings underscore the importance of empowerment in improving employee job satisfaction, suggesting a need for management to revise its strategies accordingly. Enhancing job satisfaction among faculty members has been shown to yield positive outcomes on teachers' performance (Baluyos et al., 2019). Moreover, the performance of educational institutions is intricately linked to teachers' performance (Abun, 2021), with students' performance being a direct reflection thereof (Salamat et al., 2013). Thus, prioritizing employee job satisfaction can have cascading benefits across various facets of organizational performance.

Conclusion

Based on the study's findings, the analysis concludes that overall, the empowering leadership demonstrated by administrators or office heads garnered an average rating of 3.00, falling within the "somewhat agree" or moderate extent category. This suggests that their empowering leadership style is moderate, neither exceptionally high nor low. Similarly, the various elements of empowering leadership received similar interpretations, indicating a moderate level of agreement across the board. Furthermore, employees' overall job satisfaction achieved a composite mean of 3.33, also falling within the "somewhat agree" or moderate extent category. This implies that employees' job satisfaction is moderate, neither notably high nor low.

In terms of correlation, the study noted a significant correlation. This underscores the interdependence between empowering employees and enhancing their job satisfaction. Consequently, efforts to improve employee job satisfaction cannot be undertaken in isolation from empowering them.

The study's implications extend to the discourse on enhancing the quality of education. It suggests that empowering faculty members in fulfilling their duties and responsibilities is crucial for enhancing job satisfaction and teaching performance. Given that job satisfaction is a key determinant of teaching performance, improving it can ultimately enhance students' performance and overall school performance.

However, the study acknowledges its limitations, including the limited variables measured and the scope of the study population. Future research should aim to include a broader range of empowerment-related variables and encompass a more diverse sample of schools and populations to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the subject matter.

Institutional Review Board Statement: Ethical review and approval were waived for this study as it did not involve vulnerable groups or sensitive topics.

Data Availability Statement: The data presented in this study are available upon request from the corresponding author. However, the data are not publicly available to maintain privacy.

Conflict of Interest: The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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