

Leadership Competence and Organizational Culture in A Sectarian Private Higher Educational Institution (Hei) in a First-Class Municipality

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ABSTRACT

Leadership competence and organizational culture are fundamental determinants of institutional effectiveness and long-term sustainability in higher education institutions (HEIs).

This study utilized a descriptive-quantitative research design to assess the level of leadership competence among administrators and to examine its relationship with the organizational culture of a sectarian private higher education institution situated in a first-class municipality in Nueva Vizcaya.

Data were collected from faculty members, department heads, and non-teaching personnel through an adopted survey instrument with a high reliability index (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.987$). The instrument measured key dimensions of leadership competence and organizational culture. Statistical tools employed in the analysis included mean, standard deviation, and Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient.

Findings indicated that administrators exhibited a very high level of leadership competence across measured domains. Likewise, the institution demonstrated a strong organizational culture, particularly strong ratings in mission clarity and organizational adaptability. Moreover, the results showed a statistically significant, positive correlation between leadership competence and organizational culture. This suggests that higher levels of administrative competence are associated with a stronger, more cohesive, and mission-oriented institutional culture.

The study concludes that effective leadership significantly contributes to fostering a supportive and adaptive organizational environment characterized by collaboration, ethical governance, and strategic alignment. These findings highlight the necessity of sustained leadership development initiatives to enhance institutional culture and promote continuous organizational improvement within sectarian private higher education institutions.

Keywords: Leadership competence; Organizational culture; Sectarian private higher education institution; Faith-based education; Educational leadership; Institutional effectiveness; Administrative competence; Organizational climate; Mission-driven leadership; Higher education management; Institutional sustainability; Leadership development; School governance; Strategic management; Adaptability; Organizational commitment; Catholic education; Private HEI administration; Leadership effectiveness; Institutional culture

INTRODUCTION

Leadership competence and organizational culture are widely recognized as critical determinants of institutional effectiveness, sustainability, and educational quality in higher education institutions (HEIs). These two variables significantly influence school performance, teacher effectiveness, and student outcomes. Competent leaders articulate a clear vision, make informed decisions, and manage resources efficiently, thereby creating an environment in which faculty, staff, and students can thrive. At the same time, a strong organizational culture fosters collaboration, innovation, and adaptability, which are essential in responding to internal and external changes in the educational landscape (Department of Education, 2025).

In recent years, the leadership competence of school administrators has been increasingly challenged due to the lasting effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the evolving political and socio-economic climate affecting the education sector. The responsibilities of educational leaders have become more complex, requiring them to balance academic excellence, operational efficiency, stakeholder expectations, and institutional sustainability. School leaders are not only expected to perform administrative functions but also to cultivate teacher motivation, promote professional development, and ensure student success. Effective leadership becomes particularly crucial during periods of crisis and uncertainty, as it determines how well institutions adapt, support their stakeholders, and sustain the delivery of quality education (Malco, 2024).

Organizational culture, defined as the shared values, beliefs, norms, and practices within an institution, plays a pivotal role in shaping the attitudes and behaviors of faculty and staff. In educational settings, a positive and cohesive organizational culture fosters a sense of belonging, commitment, and shared purpose among employees. When teachers and staff feel aligned with the institution's mission and values, they are more

motivated, engaged, and productive. Research consistently demonstrates that schools with strong organizational cultures achieve better outcomes in terms of teacher morale, collaboration, innovation, and student performance (Bantilan et al., 2024). Such environments encourage continuous improvement and reinforce ethical and mission-driven practices. The necessity of this study arises from the increasing challenges faced by higher education institutions, including rapid technological advancements, shifting educational demands, heightened accountability measures, and growing stakeholder expectations. In private and sectarian institutions, where competition, limited resources, and high standards of performance are prevalent, the alignment between effective leadership and a healthy organizational culture becomes even more critical. The synergy between these two elements drives institutional resilience, teacher engagement, and sustained academic quality (Wardana et al., 2024).

Furthermore, Department of Education DM No. 74, s. 2025, titled *Leadership in Action: Building Skills for a Transformative Future of 2025*, emphasizes the importance of strengthening leadership competencies to prepare educators and administrators for emerging challenges and opportunities. The memorandum highlights key leadership skills necessary to foster innovation, strategic direction, and transformative institutional growth. In this context, examining the relationship between leadership competence and organizational culture in a sectarian private higher education institution provides valuable insights into how administrative capabilities influence institutional climate and long-term sustainability.

METHODS

Research Design

This study employed a descriptive-quantitative research design to systematically and objectively analyze data relevant to the research problem. The descriptive component aimed to determine the level of leadership competencies demonstrated by administrators and the prevailing organizational culture of the higher education institution (HEI). The quantitative approach enabled the collection of numerical data to measure the identified variables and facilitate objective statistical analysis.

Structured evaluation questionnaires were administered to faculty members, department heads, and school administrators to assess leadership competence and organizational culture. The use of standardized survey instruments ensured consistency in responses and enhanced the reliability and validity of the findings. Statistical tools such as mean, standard deviation, and Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient were utilized to analyze and interpret the collected data.

Research Environment

The study was conducted at Aldersgate College, a sectarian private higher education institution located in Solano, Nueva Vizcaya, and affiliated with the United Methodist Church. The institution is committed to delivering quality education and promoting holistic development by nurturing ethically grounded, spiritually awakened, and socially responsible individuals.

Aldersgate College offers a wide range of academic programs, spanning from pre-school and basic education to undergraduate and graduate studies. As a faith-based institution, it emphasizes moral integrity, servant leadership, and community engagement as integral components of its educational philosophy.

Research Respondents

The respondents of the study included faculty members, department heads, and school principals from both the Basic Education and Tertiary levels of Aldersgate College. These individuals were selected because of their active involvement in the planning, implementation, supervision, and management of the institution's academic programs and policies.

A purposive sampling technique was utilized to ensure that the selected respondents met the specific inclusion criteria relevant to the objectives of the study. This sampling method allowed the researcher to intentionally select participants who possess direct knowledge, experience, and involvement in institutional leadership and organizational processes, thereby ensuring the relevance and credibility of the collected data.

Research Instrument

The primary data-gathering instrument used in this study was an adopted survey questionnaire from Villanueva (2017). The instrument demonstrated a very high level of reliability, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.987, indicating excellent internal consistency.

The questionnaire was originally sourced and adapted from established frameworks developed by Wagner et al. (2012) and Denison et al. (2012). It consisted of two main parts:

- **Part I – Leadership Competencies of the Administrators**, which measured key leadership dimensions such as strategic direction, decision-making, communication, people management, and institutional governance.
- **Part II – Denison Organizational Culture Survey (DOCS)**, which assessed organizational culture across core dimensions, including mission, involvement, adaptability, and consistency.

The use of a standardized and validated instrument ensured the accuracy, reliability, and validity of the responses gathered, thereby strengthening the integrity of the study's findings.

RESULTS

The findings of the study reveal that the administrators of the higher education institution (HEI) possess a **very high level of leadership competence** across all measured dimensions, particularly in leading others, task management, innovation, and self-management. This indicates that the administrators are highly capable in guiding personnel, managing institutional tasks efficiently, fostering innovative practices, and demonstrating personal accountability and professional growth.

Similarly, the results indicate that the HEI exhibits a **strong organizational culture**, with the dimensions of **mission** and **adaptability** emerging as the most prominent. This suggests that the institution maintains a clear vision and purpose while demonstrating flexibility and responsiveness to internal and external changes. The combination of competent leadership and a strong organizational culture creates an environment conducive to collaboration, ethical conduct, and strategic alignment, which supports both staff engagement and student success.

Moreover, the study established a **significant and positive relationship** between the leadership competence of administrators and the organizational culture of the

HEI. The strong correlation, particularly between the dimension of leading others and social responsibility, highlights that effective and proactive leadership directly influences the development of a unified,

adaptive, and mission-driven institutional culture. This finding underscores the role of capable leadership in shaping organizational values, fostering a positive climate, and promoting institutional goals.

These results imply that continuous leadership development and professional capacity-building initiatives are essential to sustain and enhance the alignment between leadership competence and organizational culture. By reinforcing leadership capabilities, HEIs can further strengthen their institutional culture, promote ethical practices, and ensure sustained academic and organizational excellence.

DISCUSSIONS

The study concludes that the administrators of the higher education institution (HEI) demonstrate a very high level of leadership competence, particularly in leading others, task management, innovation, and self-management. The institution also exhibits a strong organizational culture, with mission and adaptability emerging as the most prominent dimensions. A significant and positive relationship between leadership competence and organizational culture was established, indicating that effective leadership directly contributes to fostering a unified, adaptive, and mission-driven institutional environment. These findings underscore that the continuous development of leadership competence is essential for fostering, sustaining, and strengthening institutional culture and overall performance.