



**THE MEDIATING EFFECT OF INTERPERSONAL
COMMUNICATION ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
THE SELF-EFFICACY AND WORK ENGAGEMENT OF
PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS**

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Abstract:

The purpose of this study was to determine the mediating effect of interpersonal communication on the relationship between the self-efficacy and work engagement of teachers. Utilizing quantitative, non-experimental design via correlational technique, data were obtained from 300 respondents of the study who are teachers among public elementary schools in Baganga North and South District, province of Davao Oriental. The researcher utilized the Raosoft software for determining the number of respondents and an online survey mode of data collection. The researcher also utilized the statistical tools mean, Pearson r, and Medgraph using the Sobel z-test. From the results of the study, it was found that there is a very high level of self-efficacy, work engagement, and interpersonal communication among teachers. Also, results revealed that there is a significant relationship between self-efficacy and work engagement of teachers but showed no significant relationship between self-efficacy and interpersonal communication of teachers and between interpersonal communication and work engagement of teachers. Also, interpersonal communication has no significant mediating

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effect on the relationship between the self-efficacy and work engagement of teachers in public elementary schools.

Keywords: education, self-efficacy, work engagement, interpersonal communication, mediating effect, teachers, Philippines

1. Introduction

The issue of teachers' work engagement recently received attention from researchers, especially in today's fast-changing society wherein teachers' workload demands continue to increase (Meng & Sun, 2019). Studies revealed that teachers who are disengaged at work have increased in numbers than those who are highly engaged in their jobs. Disengaged teachers are less emotionally connected at work and avoid devoting their time to exerting more effort at work. Moreover, teachers who have poor work engagement are no longer happy which weakens overall organizational performance. This is also seen through absenteeism which creates a drain on school productivity (Dehghanpour *et al.*, 2020; Hastings & Agrawal, 2021). The level of work disengagement is a universal concern. The number of employees who have high engagement is very low, which is less than a quarter of the global working population, and around 39% have medium work engagement (Sudibjo & Riantini, 2023).

In conjunction, work engagement is important in school since a highly engaged academic workforce translates to improvements in productivity and a boost in the image of their respective schools. It is crucial for teaching staff to be fully engaged in their work in order to provide a good learning experience for students. Hence, maintaining positive work engagement of teachers is important at work since it results in school productivity, performance, and effectiveness (Machiha & Brew, 2019). Further, work engagement is important since it is related to a variety of positive outcomes both at individual and organizational levels, such as higher work performance, better health, and higher commitment (Moreira-Fontan *et al.*, 2019). A high level of work engagement is linked with more commitment, better involvement, and increased productivity. Highly engaged teachers are usually satisfied with their jobs, and they are more likely to demonstrate innovative behavior (Zhang *et al.*, 2021).

Self-efficacy is a predictor of work engagement wherein it has a positive influence on work engagement. Self-efficacy is also found to be able to reduce the negative effects of a less supportive work environment so that it is able to become a buffer to reduce burnout. Self-efficacy is included in the individual factors that become antecedent to work engagement. Teachers who rate themselves high on self-efficacy are more engaged in their work and experience more positive emotions and less negative emotions toward their students. Teacher self-efficacy and work engagement reciprocally influence each other (Chan *et al.*, 2020; Syihabudin *et al.*, 2023).

Further, self-efficacy is subject to the influence of external social contexts and interpersonal communication. Good interpersonal engagement helps in earning

recognition from peers, fosters self-learning ability, and facilitates positive development. Those with stronger self-assertiveness can obtain more positive experiences and results than those with weaker self-assertiveness (Chang, 2021). Also, the level of self-efficacy affects interpersonal communication. When faced with challenges, those who have high self-efficacy have a strong sense of self-worth, which will boost their motivation, passion, and interpersonal communication skills. Self-efficacy can influence motivation and activity choice (Lar *et al.*, 2023).

There is a clear link between interpersonal communication and employee engagement. In fact, research shows that organizations that communicate effectively are four times as likely to report high levels of employee work engagement. Likewise, hearing about an organization's future plans, achievements, and even problems or issues creates opportunities for those in the organization to gain perspective on their own futures and make significant contributions to everyone's success. Employees usually prefer to get this kind of information from interactions with their supervisors and managers, as well as from each other. Being treated fairly and with respect also helps them feel engaged (Grossman, 2019). Further, Srivastava (2019) confirmed by stating that interpersonal communication plays a vital role in improving work engagement. Effective communication can increase employee engagement. Hence, communication is the cornerstone of an engaged workforce.

Furthermore, the researcher has not come across a study that dealt with the mediating influence of interpersonal communication on the relationship between self-efficacy and work engagement of teachers among public elementary schools in the local setting. It is in this context that the researcher is interested in determining whether interpersonal communication has a mediating influence on the relationship between the self-efficacy and work engagement of teachers among public elementary schools in Baganga North District as this can raise concern to the intended beneficiaries of this study and possibly develop action plans to improve interpersonal communication, self-efficacy, and work engagement of teachers, thus, the need to conduct this study.

2. Literature Review

Instruction refers to the skills in explaining central themes in subjects so that even the low achieving students understand; providing good guidance and instruction to all students regardless of their level of ability; answering students' questions so that they understand difficult problems; and explaining subject matter so that most students understand the basic principles. An important task for all teachers is to explain the subject matter so that students understand the basic principles. This dimension focuses on the teacher's expectation of being able to instruct students, explain subject matter, and answer questions to improve students' understanding (Burić, & Kim, 2020; Liu & Hallinger, 2018).

Maintaining discipline refers to the skill of maintaining discipline in any school class or group of students; controlling even the most aggressive students; getting

students with behavioral problems to follow classroom rules; and getting all students to behave politely and respect the teachers. Keeping discipline is a sense of ability to deal with students' misbehaviors (Berg & Smith, 2018; Bulut & Topdemir, 2018).

Likewise, studies revealed that teachers promptly intervened in undesirable behavior from the students. It was forward that teachers have a moderate level competence of "maintaining discipline" in class. It was suggested that 91% of the teachers took care of problematic students. It showed that the teachers always used some strategies such as maintaining eye contact and touching to deal with undesirable student behavior. Maintaining eye contact was identified as a strategy that the teachers always used. Accordingly, the strategies to deal with undesirable student behavior are understanding the problem, ignoring it, establishing eye contact, warning, changing environmental factors, giving responsibility, asking questions, talking to the students, and finally contacting the school management, the family, and the school counselor. In fact, dealing with undesirable student behavior is linked to a good organization of the classroom environment (Bulut & Topdemir, 2018; Cardona-Molto *et al.*, 2020).

Moreover, as teachers, it is expected that they manifest high levels of vigor or energy and mental resilience in the delivery of instruction. They are also expected to show a willingness to invest effort in their work and must be persistent in facing academic trials and difficulties in order to show vigor. Teachers need to be moderately engaged in updating and maintaining records such as learners' progress. It implies that teachers need to deliberately understand and internalize the significance of keeping students' records and making them updated in terms of students' academic achievement. They also need to understand that keeping students' records is an important duty inherent in being a teacher. Also, teachers' vigor is seen when they have the willingness the conduct in-service training, and so they need to see the importance of growing professionally by means of attending various trainings and seminars provided by the school. Further, teachers must be able to reflect this willingness because, at the end of the day, it is the students who will benefit from their enhanced skills as a result of such training (Comighud, 2020; Ojales & De Ramos, 2021).

Dedication is an individual's deriving a sense of significance from work, feeling enthusiastic and proud about the given job, and feeling inspired and challenged by the job. It is said that employee dedication positively and significantly relates to all measures of performance. Employee dedication is an indispensable aspect of engagement behavior necessary for improved and sustained performance. Dedication in teaching includes two situations: being proud of being in the profession and having a desire for professional development. Dedicated teachers are more interested in student development and show more effort (Erturk, 2023; Roseline & Konya, 2019).

Some studies revealed the importance of interpersonal communication in making a school effective. It is important for schools to improve communication inside the organization in order to affect school effectiveness. Communication is at the core of improving school performance. In fact, it has been recognized that effective communication is present among leading schools. In particular, the communication skills

of teachers contribute to the effectiveness of the school to affect better learning of the students (Ahdhianto & Santi, 2020; Deep *et al.*, 2019).

In particular, teachers' interpersonal communication skills are important in the classroom. Managing the classroom effectively requires good communication skills. As such, it is an important key in promoting good teacher-student relationships. Further, once teachers have established a good relationship with the students, their motivation to be in the classroom and to participate in the learning activities increases. Further, there are basic communication skills as they relate to communicating with the students in the classroom (Hargie, 2021; Ramsey *et al.*, 2019).

This study is anchored on the Self-Determination Theory by Deci and Ryan (1985) which has been used in professional and academic research that relates to employee engagement. The theory relates to natural or intrinsic tendencies to behave in healthy and effective ways. Employee engagement and human behaviors have a connection to the theory and the essence of work engagement. An employee's level of engagement derives from his or her being able to control personal behaviors and goals. Disengagement and personal engagement are related to the SDT in that an employee's behavioral state is a key driver of motivation to demonstrate behavior at the professional and personal levels.

This study is supported by the Self-Efficacy Theory by Bandura (1977) which explains how self-efficacy develops and is altered, as well as how self-efficacy impacts behavioral change, performance accomplishments, and personal well-being. Self-efficacy and outcome expectancies are key to behavior initiation and maintenance. While self-efficacy is deemed to be especially central for goal setting, enactment, and attainment, self-efficacy is also a reliable target in treatments. The theory outlines which sources impact self-efficacy expectations.

This study is also supported by the Social Exchange Theory by Blau (1968) which defined social exchanges as voluntary actions of individuals that are motivated by the returns they are expected to bring and typically do in fact bring from others. Engaging in ongoing social exchanges can create a pattern of trust that facilitates the development of close relationships. When both partners are meeting each other's personal goals they create a balanced, reciprocal, interdependent relationship. Exchanges by their very nature are communication events. Some exchanges are conducted without explicit conversation while others involve detailed negotiations.

3. Material and Methods

In this study, 300 respondents were considered as the sample size from the total of 485 public elementary school teachers coming from North and South Districts, Baganga, Division of Davao Oriental, for the school year 2022-2023. The computation of the sample size is based on Slovin's formula ($n = N/(1 + Ne^2)$) (Stephanie, 2003).

With a desire to give everyone a chance to be included in the study, stratified random sampling was used. Stratified random sampling was employed in the study such that all teachers of public elementary schools of Baganga, North and South Districts had

the chance to be selected and considered for inclusion in the final sample. This was a sampling technique in which the population was divided into groups called strata. In this case, the public elementary school teachers of North District (141 respondents) and South District (159 respondents) were the groups to become respondents. Moreover, the idea is that the groupings were made so that the population units within the groups were similar (Salkind, 2007).

In addition, the researcher considered the inclusion and exclusion criteria when choosing respondents for the survey. Teachers from public elementary schools in Baganga North and South Districts whose plantilla numbers are on file with the Department of Education participated in the survey. In particular, the respondents are public elementary school teachers, who are currently employed for the School Year 2022-2023. These public elementary school teachers were the ones who were in the position to provide useful information to test the hypothesis of the study. Those teachers not in the elementary department and those who were not teaching under Baganga, North and South districts under the division of Davao Oriental were excluded from the study for they were in different work environments and supervision. Teachers who were working in private schools whether in the same or other departments were also excluded including those teachers who held managerial or supervisory positions even in the areas under study.

The respondents were chosen accordingly to answer the questionnaire with confidentiality. The target respondents were free to decline from participating in the survey. They were not forced to answer the research questionnaire and were encouraged to return the same to the researcher for its automatic disposal. Moreover, they can withdraw anytime their participation in the research process if they feel uncomfortable about the study since they were given the free will to participate without any form of consequence or penalty.

As to the research locale, the study was conducted in North and South District, Baganga, Davao Oriental, Region XI, Philippines. The municipality of Baganga is located on Mindanao Island's eastern seaboard, facing the Pacific Ocean to the east, about 100 kilometers north of Mati City. It can be reached by land from Mati City via the concrete Davao-Surigao Coastal Road or from Compostela Valley via the unpaved Compostela-Cateel Diversion Road. Also, Baganga was divided into two school districts, namely: Baganga North District and Baganga South District.

The quantitative, non-experimental design of research using correlational technique was used in this study. The correlational technique is a non-experimental design in which the researcher investigates the relationship between two or more variables in a natural setting without manipulating or controlling them. Researchers analyze the intensity of correlations between variables in correlational studies by looking at how changes in one variable are associated with changes in the other variable (Cresswell, 2013). Apparently, correlational studies have independent and dependent variables with the effects of the independent variable observed on the dependent value (Patidar, 2013). The researcher chose this design to align the variables based on the

discussion of the aforementioned related literature. This technique was appropriate since the study aimed to determine whether self-efficacy provided a relationship to the work engagement of public elementary school teachers (Creswell, 2014).

Moreover, a mediation model was used in this study. The mediation model is one that seeks to identify and explicate the mechanism or process that underlies an observed relationship between an independent variable (self-efficacy) and a dependent variable (work engagement) via the inclusion of a third explanatory variable, known as a mediator variable (interpersonal communication). Rather than hypothesizing a direct causal relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable, a mediational model hypothesizes that the independent variable influences the mediator variable, which in turn influences the dependent variable. Thus, the mediator variable serves to clarify the nature of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. In other words, mediating relationships occur when a third variable plays an important role in governing the relationship between the other two variables (MacKinnon, 2008).

For the systematic procedure in the data collection, the researcher first sought permission from the Schools Division Superintendent, then from the District Supervisors and School Heads involved for the involvement of the 300 teachers as respondents of the study. Also, before the actual data collection, the researcher secured a Certificate of Compliance from UMERG (UMERG 2022-251) to ensure compliance with some ethical considerations in research.

For the fast facilitation of the survey questionnaire, the researcher adopted 2 methods of data gathering: the face-to-face and the online surveys. During the administration of the survey questionnaire, the researcher made sure that the classes were not interrupted. For the face-to-face method, from the distribution and up to the retrieval of the survey questionnaire, the researcher strictly observed the safety protocols mandated by the government during this time of pandemic as per mandate by the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Emerging Infectious Disease (COVID-19) such as physical/social distancing and wearing of face masks. It took the researcher a total of 45 days to conduct the face-to-face survey and simultaneous to the actual survey was the online survey using Google Forms. The researcher made use of Google Forms where the item questions were encoded together with the instructions on how to complete the survey questionnaire. There were issues encountered by the researcher during the data gathering as its retrieval was quite slow due to some internet connection problems and pressing assignments that confronted the respondents during the time of the survey.

After the retrieval of the questionnaires, the data were collated and tabulated and the appropriate statistical tools were employed by the Statistician to derive the necessary data for interpretation and further analysis. Based on the findings of the study, conclusions and recommendations were formulated.

As to the statistical tools and for more comprehensive interpretation and analysis of the data, the following are employed: Mean was used to determine the level of Interpersonal Communication, Self-Efficacy, and Work Engagement, in answer to the

research objectives 1, 2, and 3. Pearson r was applied to determine if the relationships are significant between Interpersonal Communication, Self-Efficacy, and Work Engagement. This answered research objective number 4. Medgraph using Sobel z -test was employed to identify the mediating effect of interpersonal communication on the relationship between self-efficacy and work engagement of teachers in public elementary schools. This answered research objective 5.

In the conduct of this study especially before the data were gathered, ethical issues and considerations were observed. The researcher had undergone an evaluation conducted by the members of the ethics review committee. After several review processes, this study was marked as passed and approved by the UM Ethics Review Committee (UMERC) with Protocol Number 2022-251.

The researcher ensured that the data gathered were kept confidential and that such information was utilized only for the purpose of the research. No names were required from the respondents so their identities were anonymous. Thus, this research adhered to the Data Privacy Act of 2012 which protects the respondents from unauthorized processing of their private or identifiable information or guarantees them that their responses cannot be traced back to their real sources to protect their identity. After the conclusion of the study, the accomplished survey questionnaire was shredded as they already served its purpose. Likewise, any soft copies of the data were destroyed or deleted from the hard drives where they were saved. Each target respondent was given an informed consent form prior to the gathering of data. In the form, the title and the purpose of the study were stated. It was in a form asking for their voluntary consent in giving their ideas for the study. The respondent signed the ICF to prove his/her willingness to participate and was assured of the confidentiality of the data and that the data was used only for the purpose of the study.

In complying with this ethical policy, the researcher ensures the appropriateness of identified recruiting parties. The participants were carefully selected based on the criteria provided in the research. No individual answered the questionnaire if he/she did not qualify for the criteria. For the misuse of the data and information, the respondent has the right to file a complaint and request for investigation. The study did not involve high-risk situations that the respondents experienced. The researcher ensured that the participation or non-participation of the identified teachers as respondents of the study did not in any way affect their employment status in the respective agencies where they belong. Some mitigating measures were also considered, including psychological, financial, and physical preparations.

The elementary teachers under study were the primary beneficiaries of the study and as such they were able to understand the dynamics of interpersonal communication, self-efficacy, and work engagement in the workplace and what are the possible lessons they will learn from the results of the study. In addition, this study will be used as a practical reference for future research in the field of education. Further, before the conclusion of this research, the respondents received tangible benefits such as a simple token (notebook) from the researcher.

Moreover, before the conduct of actual data collection, the researcher secured Compliance Certificate from UMERC (UMERC Protocol Number 2022-251) with the understanding that all ethical considerations were properly observed. The researcher ensured that the materials used undergo paraphrasing and were expressed in the researcher's own ideas. There was no portion of the study which made use of another person's ideas or words and if there was such, the person has been given appropriate credit for his works and study.

To ensure that there was no plagiarism that happened in the whole duration of the study, the study underwent a plagiarism check at the University using Turnitin. The study underwent the standard procedure of research established by the Professional Schools of the University of Mindanao. There was no trace/evidence of intentional misrepresentation, or there was no making up of data and/or results, or purposefully putting forward conclusions that were not accurate. No inconsistency with the existing literature among the information was included in the manuscript.

The study had no conflict of interest (COI) since the researcher had no relationship with the respondents of the study, either officially or personally. The researcher ensured that there was no circumstance that provided the potential opportunities where the respondent's responses were compromised or had put in their personal interests or those of any other person or organization. This study was a requirement for the completion of the master's degree in education majoring in educational management at the University of Mindanao Professional School.

There was no deceit and everything that was written and reflected was true and underwent validation and thorough checking from different experts in the field of research. The researcher secured proper permission to conduct the study in the form of a letter approved by the Dean, Professional Schools, University of Mindanao, addressed to the Division Superintendent where the respondents are assigned, to ensure continuity and smooth conduct of the data gathering.

Lastly, no person was authorized to publish nor present this paper except for the researcher herself or her adviser without the consent of the researcher. In case, an organization wants to have a copy of the result of the study then it can be accessed only to create programs and policies in the organization but still with the permission of the researcher, adviser, and the university. For purposes of the publication, the adviser becomes a co-author of the study.

4. Results and Discussion

The level of self-efficacy of teachers is very high, resulting from the very high levels of responses. The indicators of *instruction, maintaining discipline, adapting instruction to individual needs, motivating students, coping with change, and cooperating with colleagues and parents* have very high ratings. These indicators are arranged from the highest to the lowest level.

Table 1: Level of Self-Efficacy of Teachers

| Indicators | SD | Mean | Descriptive Level |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------------|
| Instruction | 0.40 | 4.68 | Very High |
| Adapting Instruction to Individual Needs | 0.48 | 4.53 | Very High |
| Motivating Students | 0.42 | 4.50 | Very High |
| Maintaining Discipline | 0.38 | 4.57 | Very High |
| Cooperating With Colleagues and Parents | 0.31 | 4.45 | Very High |
| Coping With Change | 0.65 | 4.53 | Very High |
| Overall | 0.27 | 4.54 | Very High |

The very high-level rating of instruction is suggestive of the very evident teacher self-efficacy in instruction showing their belief and ability to effectively convey central subject themes to all students, irrespective of their academic proficiency, by providing clear guidance, addressing questions, and ensuring comprehension of fundamental principles. This is in line with the various authors (Burić, & Kim, 2020; Liu & Hallinger, 2018) stating that an important task for all teachers is to explain the subject matter so that students understand the basic principles. Teachers are expected to effectively instruct students, explain subject matter, and answer questions to improve students' understanding.

Also, the very high-level rating of maintaining discipline is indicative of the very high ability of teachers to foster a disciplined and respectful classroom environment, effectively managing student behavior, including those with behavioral challenges, to ensure compliance with rules and respect for teachers. This claim concurs with the statements of various authors (Berg & Smith, 2018; Bulut & Topdemir, 2018; Cardona-Molto *et al.*, 2020) who mentioned that keeping discipline is a sense of teachers' ability to deal with students' misbehaviors. Teachers consistently address and manage undesirable student behavior, demonstrating competence in maintaining classroom discipline.

Table 2: Level of Work Engagement of Teachers

| Indicators | SD | Mean | Descriptive Level |
|----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------|
| Vigor | 0.52 | 4.50 | Very High |
| Dedication | 0.40 | 4.47 | Very High |
| Absorption | 0.36 | 4.51 | Very High |
| Overall | 0.37 | 4.50 | Very High |

The very high level resulted from the very high ratings of the respondents. The indicators of work engagement of teachers which are the absorption, vigor, and dedication were arranged from highest to lowest.

The very high level of teachers' absorption is indicative of the teachers' intense immersion in their jobs, always experiencing happiness, losing track of time, and finding it challenging to detach from their jobs. This is in line with the studies of various authors (Balbes & Quines, 2022; Guhao & Quines, 2021) which explained that teachers' absorption indicates concentration and engagement in their teaching jobs. They have work experience which is enjoyable. Hence, teachers are immersing themselves fully in their

work, being deeply consumed by their responsibilities and the classroom environment. They often lose track of time and find it challenging to detach from their job.

Moreover, the very high level of vigor of teachers is suggestive that teachers' vigor is evident through their strong, energetic, and resilient approach to work, as they consistently feel motivated, mentally resilient, and persevering even in challenging situations, demonstrating a sustained enthusiasm for their profession. This aligns with the findings of various authors (Comighud, 2020; Ojales & De Ramos, 2021) which revealed a very high level of vigor of teachers in public schools. Teachers had a very good command of work engagement in terms of vigor, indicating that teachers put energy, effort, and enthusiasm into their work to attain authoritative aims and goals. Also, teachers are expected they manifest very high levels of vigor or energy and mental resilience in the delivery of instruction. They must show a willingness to invest effort in their work and must be persistent in facing academic trials and difficulties in order to show vigor.

Lastly, the very high level of teachers' dedication is indicative that teachers' dedication is fueled by their deep sense of purpose, enthusiasm, and pride in their challenging and meaningful work, inspiring unwavering commitment. This is supported by various authors (Erturk, 2023; Roseline & Konya, 2019) who mentioned that dedication among teachers involves finding significance, enthusiasm, pride, inspiration, and challenge in their work, making it a crucial element of engagement behavior within the profession. Further, inherent to being a teacher is being dedicated in all undertakings, especially in the inherent mandate of being committed and passionate in the teaching profession.

Table 3: Level of Interpersonal Communication of Teachers

| Item Statements | SD | Mean | Descriptive Level |
|---|------|------|-------------------|
| Paying attention to the suitability of the quality, location, and timing of the feedback. | 0.66 | 4.46 | Very High |
| Avoiding using routine phrases that are likely to cause negative ideas and feelings. | 0.58 | 4.48 | Very High |
| Be careful at creating opportunities for teachers to express themselves. | 0.59 | 4.60 | Very High |
| Trying to understand teachers' thoughts and feelings. | 0.66 | 4.48 | Very High |
| Avoiding spontaneous reactions instead of considering the problem in detail first. | 0.60 | 4.55 | Very High |
| Paying attention to include the details of the issue when giving feedback to the teachers. | 0.63 | 4.48 | Very High |
| Paying attention to responding and giving feedback to the issues mentioned by teachers. | 0.57 | 4.59 | Very High |
| Paying attention to responding and giving feedback to the issues mentioned by teachers. | 0.60 | 4.62 | Very High |
| Keeping their promise. | 0.56 | 4.67 | Very High |
| Paying attention to the consistency of their verbal and non-verbal communication with teachers. | 0.56 | 4.67 | Very High |

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| | | | |
|---|-------------|-------------|------------------|
| Trying to exemplify the feedback until they make sure that it is being understood. | 0.56 | 4.64 | Very High |
| Trying to understand the reasons underlying teachers' attitudes and behaviours. | 0.59 | 4.57 | Very High |
| Reflecting willingness to communicate with teachers to acknowledge them better. | 0.70 | 4.44 | Very High |
| Reflecting willingness to clarify the problems that occurred concerning teachers' messages. | 0.58 | 4.50 | Very High |
| Exhibiting willingness to share their feelings. | 0.58 | 4.53 | Very High |
| Making eye contact when listening to teachers. | 0.72 | 4.47 | Very High |
| Reflecting frank feelings in the communication process. | 0.66 | 4.46 | Very High |
| Being creative when transmitting a message using current materials. | 0.62 | 4.55 | Very High |
| Trying to anticipate teachers' reactions during the communication process. | 0.58 | 4.56 | Very High |
| Trying to configure the communication process stressing on teachers' strong characteristics and skills. | 0.60 | 4.63 | Very High |
| Trying to use both verbal and non-verbal feedback. | 0.58 | 4.59 | Very High |
| Expressing my ideas about personal and professional issues honestly on time. | 0.63 | 4.56 | Very High |
| Overall | 0.43 | 4.55 | Very High |

The very high level of interpersonal communication of teachers reveals the very high degree of effective interpersonal communication among teachers that involves a multifaceted approach that includes active listening, empathy, clear and honest feedback, a focus on individual strengths, and the use of both verbal and non-verbal cues, fostering a conducive environment for understanding, collaboration, and growth. This is in line with the authors (Hargie, 2021; Ramsey *et al.*, 2019) stating that teachers' interpersonal communication skills play a pivotal role in classroom management and in cultivating positive teacher-student relationships. Teachers see the importance of fundamental communication skills within the classroom context.

Moreover, this is supported by various studies (Ahdhianto & Santi, 2020; Deep *et al.*, 2019) wherein it is important for schools to improve communication inside the organization in order to affect school effectiveness. Communication is at the core of improving school performance. In fact, effective communication is present among leading schools. In particular, the communication skills of teachers contribute to the effectiveness of the school to affect the better learning of the students.

Table 4.1: Significance on the Relationship Between
 the Self-Efficacy and Work Engagement of Teachers

| Self-Efficacy | Work Engagement | | | Overall |
|--|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| | Vigor | Dedication | Absorption | |
| Instruction | -.017 (0.767) | .004 (0.944) | -.041 (0.478) | -.020 (0.737) |
| Adapting Instruction to Individual Needs | .022 (0.709) | -.066 (0.259) | .070 (0.230) | .009 (0.873) |
| Motivating Students | .177* (0.002) | -.004 (0.942) | .056 (0.332) | .099 (0.089) |
| Maintaining Discipline | -.001 (0.981) | -.007 (0.901) | -.101 (0.082) | -.034 (0.564) |
| Cooperating with Colleagues and Parents | .349* (0.000) | .324* (0.000) | .371* (0.000) | .399* (0.000) |
| Coping with Change | .788* (0.000) | .551* (0.000) | .631* (0.000) | .764* (0.000) |
| Overall | .425* (0.000) | .257* (0.000) | .322* (0.000) | .393* (0.000) |

The correlation between self-efficacy and work engagement of teachers revealed a significant relationship. This implies that in other words, the teachers' belief in their ability to perform their job tasks effectively appears to have a direct impact on their overall engagement for their work. This finding confirms the claims of various studies (Chan *et al.*, 2020; Syihabudin *et al.*, 2023) wherein self-efficacy is a predictor of work engagement. Self-efficacy is included in the individual factors that become antecedent to work engagement. Teacher self-efficacy and work engagement reciprocally influence each other.

Table 4.2: Significance on the Relationship Between the
 Self-Efficacy and Interpersonal Communication of Teachers

| Self-Efficacy | Interpersonal Communication |
|--|-------------------------------|
| | Overall |
| Instruction | -.180* (0.002) |
| Adapting Instruction to Individual Needs | -.102 (0.079) |
| Motivating Students | .008 (0.884) |
| Maintaining Discipline | -.020 (0.737) |
| Cooperating with Colleagues and Parents | .152* (0.009) |
| Coping with Change | .122* (0.036) |
| Overall | .000 (0.993) |

The correlation between self-efficacy and interpersonal communication of teachers revealed no significant relationship. This implies that the teachers' belief in their ability to perform their job tasks effectively does not appear to have a direct impact on their overall interpersonal communication skills in the context of this study. This negates the claims of various authors (Chang, 2021; Lar *et al.*, 2023) who stated that self-efficacy is subject to the influence of external social contexts and interpersonal communication. Those with stronger self-assertiveness can obtain more positive experiences and results than those with weaker self-assertiveness. The level of self-efficacy affects interpersonal communication. When faced with challenges, those who have high self-efficacy have a strong sense of self-worth, which will boost their motivation, passion, and interpersonal communication skills.

Table 4.3: Significance on the Relationship between the Interpersonal Communication and Work Engagement of Teachers

| | Work Engagement | | | Overall |
|------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| | Vigor | Dedication | Absorption | |
| Interpersonal Communication | -.014 (0.813) | -.023 (0.688) | .065 (0.262) | .006 (0.921) |

The correlation between interpersonal communication and work engagement of teachers revealed no significant relationship. This implies that interpersonal communication among teachers does not appear to have a direct impact on their overall engagement with their work in the context of this study. This contradicts the studies of various authors (Grossman, 2019; Srivastava, 2019) which revealed that there is a clear link between interpersonal communication and employee engagement. It disproves the idea that organizations that communicate effectively are four times as likely to report high levels of employee's work engagement.

Table 5: Significance of the Mediation of Interpersonal Communication on the Relationship Between the Self-Efficacy and Work Engagement of Teachers

| Path | Estimates | | SE | C.R. | P | Legend |
|---------|----------------|--------------|------|-------|------|--------|
| | Unstandardized | Standardized | | | | |
| SE → IC | -.001 | .000 | .092 | -.008 | .993 | NS |
| SE → WE | .540 | .393 | .073 | 7.372 | *** | S |
| IC → WE | .005 | .006 | .046 | .112 | .911 | NS |

The aim of this study is to contribute to the literature regarding the possible indirect, mediating variable for the relationship between self-efficacy and work engagement. Specifically, interpersonal communication was investigated as a possible mediating variable that could explain the effect of self-efficacy on work engagement. No mediation is found in the study. Important and significant effects are also presented that may help in the enhancement of the existing researches on self-efficacy and work engagement. Further, the studies of these authors on the relationship between self-efficacy and work engagement negate the theory of Deci and Ryan (1985) wherein employee engagement

and human behaviors have a connection to the theory and the essence of work engagement. Disengagement and personal engagement are related to the SDT in that an employee's behavioral state is a key driver of motivation to demonstrate behavior at the professional and personal levels.

Moreover, the current study has found that interpersonal communication is not a mediator of self-efficacy and work engagement and did not meet Baron and Kenny's (1986) mediation guidelines. The mediation analysis involved the path between self-efficacy and interpersonal communication, and the path between interpersonal communication and work engagement. The findings negate the relationship between self-efficacy and work engagement leading to negate one of the authors of this study (Lisbona *et al.*, 2018) who declared that there is a positive gain spiral where self-efficacy increases work engagement, which increases self-efficacy over time.

5. Recommendations

As to the recommendations, the study revealed the domain of self-efficacy of teachers which is cooperating with colleagues and parents got the lowest mean. Thus, the researcher recommends that the Department of Education invest in specialized professional development programs that focus on improving teachers' skills in collaborating with colleagues and engaging with parents effectively. These programs may be designed to provide practical strategies and guidance. Also, school heads can foster a school culture that promotes collaboration among teachers and between teachers and parents. Encourage open communication channels and recognize and reward collaborative efforts. More importantly, teachers can take advantage of professional development opportunities to improve collaboration skills. Attend workshops, seminars, or courses focused on effective teamwork and communication.

Moreover, results showed that dedication was the lowest domain in terms of teachers' work engagement. The researcher recommends that school heads provide strong leadership that promotes a culture of dedication. They may actively support teachers in their professional growth and personal well-being. Also, teachers can set specific, meaningful, and achievable goals for their teaching practice. Having clear objectives can enhance dedication as teachers work toward fulfilling them.

Additionally, when the aspect of teachers' interpersonal communication related to reflecting teachers' willingness to communicate and acknowledge others better is identified as the lowest, it is recommended to address this issue to improve overall communication effectiveness. School heads may organize communication skills training and workshops for teachers to improve their interpersonal communication abilities. School heads shall ensure that these workshops address not only the technical aspects of communication but also the importance of empathy, active listening, and acknowledging others. Hence, teachers need to attend communication skills training sessions and workshops organized by the school. They may take an active role in their professional development to enhance their communication abilities.

Additionally, when research findings indicate that interpersonal communication does not have a significant mediating effect on the relationship between self-efficacy and work engagement of teachers in public elementary schools, it suggests opportunities for future research in this area. Future researchers may investigate other potential mediating factors that may explain the relationship between self-efficacy and work engagement among teachers. Consider factors such as leadership styles, organizational culture, job satisfaction, or teacher support systems. Further, other researchers may also complement quantitative research with qualitative studies to gain a deeper understanding of the experiences and perceptions of teachers. Qualitative research can capture nuances and provide richer insights into the relationships at play. By pursuing these research directions, scholars can further advance our understanding of the complex interplay between self-efficacy, interpersonal communication, and work engagement among teachers in public elementary schools.

6. Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, conclusions and recommendations are drawn in this section. There is a very high level of mean for interpersonal communication, a very high level of mean for self-efficacy a very high level of mean for work engagement of teachers. Moreover, there is a significant relationship between self-efficacy and work engagement. However, there is no significant relationship between self-efficacy and interpersonal communication and no significant relationship between interpersonal communication and work engagement. Lastly, there is no mediation on the effect of interpersonal communication on the relationship between self-efficacy and work engagement.

The findings of the study clearly negate the notion about the mediating effect of interpersonal communication on the relationship between self-efficacy and work engagement. The findings negate the anchor theory which is the Self-Determination Theory by Deci and Ryan (1985) wherein employee engagement and human behaviors have a connection to the theory and the essence of work engagement. An employee's level of engagement derives from his or her being able to control personal behaviors and goals. Disengagement and personal engagement are related to the SDT in that an employee's behavioral state is a key driver of motivation to demonstrate behavior at the professional and personal levels.

Acknowledgements

The researcher would like to extend her warmest and sincerest appreciation to the individuals who made this study a success.

To Dr. Raymunda L. Apostol, her adviser, for her unwavering support and expert assistance;

To the chairman of the thesis committee, Dr. Elleine Rose E. Oliva, and the members: Dr Mary Ann E. Tarusan, Dr. Jocelyn B. Bacasmot, and Dr. Lorna T. General

for their noteworthy suggestions and judicious recommendations that completed this work;

The officers of the Department of Education particularly the Division Superintendent, the School Principals for giving permission to conduct the study.

To her loved ones: husband, Napoleon Dann T. Morales, mother, Regina S. Pudang, brothers and sisters, Maricel, Marilou, Marvin, Benjie, Rowena, and Marytie, for their continuous support be it moral and financial, understanding, and never-ending love and care.

Above all, to the Almighty God, for His continuous blessings that made this study a success. To Him be the Glory and honor forever.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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