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# Empowering leadership as a pathway to enhance job satisfaction among college employees

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### ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between empowering leadership and employees' job satisfaction in a Catholic higher education institution in Ilocos Norte, Philippines. Using a descriptive-correlational research design, data were collected from 130 administrators and employees through validated questionnaires. Descriptive statistics, specifically the weighted mean, were used to determine the levels of empowering leadership and job satisfaction. At the same time, Pearson's correlation coefficient was employed to examine the relationship between the two variables. The findings revealed that both empowering leadership ( $M = 3.00$ ) and employees' job satisfaction ( $M = 3.33$ ) were at a moderate level, indicating opportunities for improvement. The analysis further showed a significant positive relationship between empowering leadership and employees' job satisfaction, suggesting that employees tend to be more satisfied when leaders effectively communicate the institution's vision, provide autonomy, delegate authority, and empower them to achieve meaningful goals. The findings underscore the importance of strengthening and empowering leadership practices to foster a more engaged and satisfied workforce. Although the study was limited to a single institution, it provides empirical evidence supporting the role of empowering leadership in enhancing employee job satisfaction within Philippine higher education. Future studies involving larger samples and more diverse institutional contexts are recommended to validate and extend these findings.

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## Introduction

An organization's success or failure is often judged by leadership. When organizations experience poor performance or crises, stakeholders typically hold leaders accountable because they are ultimately responsible for

setting direction, making decisions, and ensuring organizational effectiveness (Nordgren, 2016). Likewise, top management is frequently blamed for organizational failure or bankruptcy (D'Aveni, 1990). High-profile disasters, such as the sinking of the *Titanic*, the *El Faro* cargo ship, and the *Sea Diamond* cruise ship, further illustrate how leadership decisions can have far-reaching consequences (Ismay & Smith, 1912; Carassava, 2007; Dooley, 2017). These examples underscore the critical role of leadership in influencing organizational outcomes.

Among the many leadership approaches, empowering leadership has gained increasing attention for its emphasis on trust, participation, and shared responsibility. Unlike authoritarian leadership, which centralizes decision-making and limits employee involvement, empowering leadership encourages employees to participate in decisions, exercise autonomy, and contribute their ideas to the organization. Research has shown that authoritarian leadership can reduce employee performance, increase psychological contract violations, and foster organizational cynicism (Wang et al., 2019; Jiang et al., 2017). In contrast, involving employees in decision-making enhances their sense of self-worth, commitment, and intrinsic motivation (Keller, 1995; Thomas & Velthouse, 1990).

Empowering leadership is commonly reflected in four key practices: communicating a clear organizational vision, promoting employee autonomy, delegating authority, and setting meaningful individual goals. Leaders who adopt these practices create an environment where employees are trusted to make decisions, take ownership of their responsibilities, and contribute to achieving organizational goals. Such empowerment not only improves organizational effectiveness but also strengthens employees' intrinsic motivation and engagement (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990).

Although previous studies have examined the relationship between empowering leadership and employee performance, limited research has explored its influence on employees' job satisfaction within the higher education setting. Addressing this gap, the present study investigates the relationship between empowering leadership and employees' job satisfaction in a Catholic higher education institution. Specifically, it examines the extent to which school administrators empower faculty and staff through vision-sharing, autonomy, delegation of authority, and individual goal setting, and how these leadership practices relate to employees' job satisfaction. The findings are expected to provide school administrators with evidence-based insights to strengthen leadership practices, improve employee satisfaction, and foster a more productive and engaged academic community.

## ***Literature review***

A literature review is a method for gathering ideas from prior research on the current topic (Baumeister & Leary, 1997). It helps to establish the foundation of the theories of the current study (Webster & Watson, 2002). It also provides a comprehensive idea about the current topic (Snyder, 2019). Thus, this part reviews the related literature, including studies that discuss the current study's theories.

### ***The concept of leadership***

Leadership plays an important role in achieving organizational objectives. Blame would be thrown at the one who leads or manages the business organization. Bennis and Nanus (2007) pointed out that leaders make an organization effective or ineffective. The performance of an organization reflects its leadership. Effective or ineffective organizations reflect effective or ineffective leadership. This is exactly what Tichy and Cohen (2007) say: winning is about leadership. Leadership is to lead the organization to succeed. Therefore, the one in a position of leadership needs to understand what leadership is. Someone in a leadership position who does not know their role as a leader can be disastrous for the organization. Al Khajeh (2018) demonstrated this in his study of the relationship between leadership styles and organizational performance. He pointed out in his study that leadership is a key factor in the success or failure of any organization. He contended that transformational and democratic

styles have contributed to an organization's success. His study, among many others, confirmed the importance of leadership in achieving organizational goals through people. Organizational success is an indication of a leader's success in influencing their people to attain the goals. Northouse (2015) argued that leadership is a process by which a person influences others, or followers, to achieve stated goals. In other words, a winning organization can only be achieved through people and good leadership. Leaders must know the art of leadership. The process of influencing people to achieve organizational goals is the art of leadership. Leadership is a package, not only about skills or knowledge, but is a combination of all: knowledge, character, values, and action. Tichy and Cohen (2007) argued that leaders not only have ideas and knowledge but also have the values, energy, and edge. They have the knowledge and basic skills to carry out their job and guide their followers, but they also have the values to inform their decisions and the energy to implement them. Bennis and Nanus (2007) pointed out several important aspects of leadership: character, a strong determination to realize the vision, the capacity to generate and sustain trust, a results-oriented approach, not merely creating optimism without action, and enrolling people in the vision through that optimism. Without good moral character or moral values, a leader cannot be effective in performing his/her job. However, even if he/she has the character, without the strong determination to implement what has been decided, he/she will fail. Strong determination should be accompanied by trust. To get the cooperation of their followers in performing their duties and responsibilities, leaders must be trusted and be able to sustain the trust relationship with their followers.

Following the above concept, we argue that leadership cannot be effective without the cooperation of his/her followers. Getting the employees involved in the management process is the only way to create a winning organization. In other words, a leader can only win by creating winning leaders down the line. Tichy and Cohen (2007) contended that a winning organization has leaders at all levels. Thus, the main responsibility of a leader is to develop leaders at all levels of the organization. Leadership is not only at the top of management, but it must exist at all levels. Producing leaders at all levels makes a difference between winners and losers. This is also what Maxwell (1995) emphasized: the main duty and responsibility of a leader is to develop leaders around him. How to create or build leaders around him is the art of empowerment.

### ***The concept of empowerment and empowering leadership***

Empowerment has been discussed by many authors, including Bennis and Nanus (1985, 2007), House (1988), and Neilsen (1986). Bennis and Nanus (1985, 2007) discussed the nature of 21<sup>st</sup>-century leadership, including empowerment. For them, 21<sup>st</sup>-century leadership would change in its focus. Leadership would focus on developing leaders at all levels, leading with vision, sharing information across levels, empowering and inspiring individuals, facilitating teamwork, coaching, and creating an agenda for change. Leaders would not be the center of decision-making, would not focus on directing, supervising, or controlling, and would not act like a boss. House (1988) discussed leadership behaviors that enhance subordinates' empowerment and satisfaction. Leaders' behavior should increase subordinates' motivation and capabilities. Nielsen (1986) contended that empowerment involves providing the resources they need, thereby increasing their sense of self-worth. His study had shown that psychological empowerment correlates with organizational performance.

Based on these concepts, there is no consensus on the meaning or definition of empowerment. Merriam–Webster would define empowerment as the “act or action of empowering someone or something, the granting of the power, right, or authority to perform various acts or duties.” Alternatively, “the state of being empowered to do something: the power, right, or authority to do something.” The Cambridge Dictionary would define empowerment as “the process of gaining freedom and power to do what you want or to control what happens to you”. Collins Dictionary defines empowerment as “the process of giving them power and status in a particular situation”. The definitions offered by different dictionaries are sufficient for us to establish the definition of empowerment. In the context of

our topic, empowerment is the process of granting power or authority to others or employees, enabling them to operate independently of leadership control and carry out their duties and responsibilities. In the legal sense, empowerment means authorization (Thomas, 1990). In other words, through empowerment, the leader allows, consents to, and permits employees to perform their duties and make decisions on the leader's behalf.

Empowering leadership style, then, is a process of “sharing power to enhance employees’ motivation and investment in their work” (Zhang & Zhou, 2014). This leadership style empowers employees psychologically to improve their work outcomes (Spreitzer, 1995). When they are empowered, their sense of self-worth is strengthened because they feel that their work is important. According to the study by Hao et al. (2018), empowering leadership is positively correlated with task performance, creative performance, and passion for work. This is the effect of being given the authority to perform one's task independently, with minimal intervention or control from management. Employees are more committed and engaged in their jobs when they are given the freedom to perform their work in their own way, without strict supervision and control from the leader. Chen et al. (2011) studied the effect of empowering leadership on team members and found that it positively affects cooperative and innovative behavior, as well as their commitment. Other studies have shown that empowering leadership has become an important factor in improving job performance (Humborstad, 2014) and that employees have become more proactive, seeking continuous improvement in the quality of their work and continually searching for creative solutions to workplace problems (Wellins, 1991). Lee et al. (2018) found that empowering leaders are more effective at influencing creativity and citizenship behavior than leaders who focus on task performance. They are also more trusted by employees than leaders who do not empower them. Finally, they are more effective at influencing employees' job performance.

### ***Element of empowerment***

Based on the meaning of leadership and the concepts of empowerment and empowering leadership we have discussed, we can now identify the elements of empowerment.

1. **Vision-Mission-oriented empowerment.** The first element of leadership and the basis of empowerment is vision and mission. Empowerment is a tool to achieve the stated vision and mission. Vision and mission serve as guides for decision-making and job performance. Employees who understand the organization's vision and mission do not need a leader who is strict and autocratic, as the vision and mission are already sufficient to guide their work. It serves as their guide in carrying out their duties and responsibilities. Therefore, employees must be involved in designing the vision and mission. By involving the employees in writing the vision and mission, objectives, key result areas, performance indicators, and strategies (Morato, 2006), the employees own the vision and mission. Thus, it becomes a collective vision, not the leader's alone. With a collective vision and mission, employees know what to do, where to go, how to get there, and what is expected of them. Collective vision and mission imply the delegation of authority. Therefore, an effective vision and mission allow leadership to delegate authority to employees or others who can create better outcomes and make decisions. Having a clear vision and mission helps management save time in controlling, supervising, and monitoring, and in avoiding unnecessary arguments about what to do and how to do it (Searle, Hayes & Weiss, 2018).
2. **Independence or Autonomy.** Understanding autonomy or independence is simple. Looking into the root word of the term, "autonomy", the word is composed of two root words: autos, which means self, and nomos, which means rule, governance, or law. From such root words, we derive the idea of autonomy, which encompasses self-governance or self-rule, self-determination, freedom of will, individuality, independence, and self-knowledge (Agich, 1993, 1994). It is the absence of external interference. In light

of the purpose of this paper, autonomy means that an individual is given the freedom to determine or to govern himself/herself in carrying out his/her duties and responsibilities. In other words, the individual is given the capacity to make his/her own decision (Dryden, n.d) without the interference of higher authority or external influencers. It is the autonomy of an individual's action and thought, not dictated by external authorities other than himself/herself. With autonomy, a person can shape their work according to their best judgment. Saragih (2011) pointed out in her study that job autonomy is significantly related to job satisfaction and job performance. Also, Morgeson et al. (2005) found that job autonomy affects employees' job performance and satisfaction.

3. **Delegation of Authority.** Delegation of authority is an essential leadership practice that enables organizations to function more effectively. As noted by Abun (2018), no leader possesses complete knowledge or the capacity to address every issue alone. Because leadership responsibilities often demand significant time and energy, leaders must delegate appropriate authority to others so that decisions can be made efficiently on their behalf. According to Bennis and Nanus (2007), delegation is the downward distribution of authority and power, allowing subordinates to perform tasks and make decisions within defined limits. This sharing of authority not only improves organizational effectiveness but also enhances employees' psychological motivation by making them feel valued contributors to the organization (Abun, 2018).

Similarly, Kokemuller (2007) explained that delegation involves assigning responsibilities while providing clear guidelines for their execution. Effective delegation is not merely transferring tasks but entrusting responsibility to capable individuals while clearly defining what should be delegated, to whom, and under what conditions. Bennis and Nanus (2007) identified three essential elements of delegation: authority, responsibility, and accountability. Delegated employees are empowered to make decisions, allocate resources, and direct work within the scope assigned to them. At the same time, they remain responsible for fulfilling agreed-upon duties and accountable to the leader who delegated the authority (Abun, 2018). Empirical evidence also supports the value of delegation. For example, Al-Jammal and Al-Khasawneh (2015) found that delegation of authority has a significant positive effect on employees' job performance.

4. **Individual Goal-Oriented Empowerment.** Empowerment goes beyond simply granting authority to subordinates. Its primary purpose is to enable employees to act independently and make decisions within their areas of expertise to achieve the organization's shared goals. To accomplish this, organizational goals should be cascaded from top management to departments, units, and ultimately to individual employees. According to Stavrou et al. (2015), assigning specific goals influences how departments operate and how individuals think, feel, and behave. This goal-oriented approach, also described as task-driven or results-driven, directs employees' efforts toward achieving desired outcomes.

Individual goals provide employees with a clear sense of purpose and guide their actions at work. They encourage employees to develop the skills needed to accomplish assigned tasks and serve as a source of intrinsic motivation by inspiring them to maximize their capabilities (Ordóñez et al., 2009). Supporting this view, Borlongan-Conway et al. (2010) found that goal orientation is positively associated with creative performance.

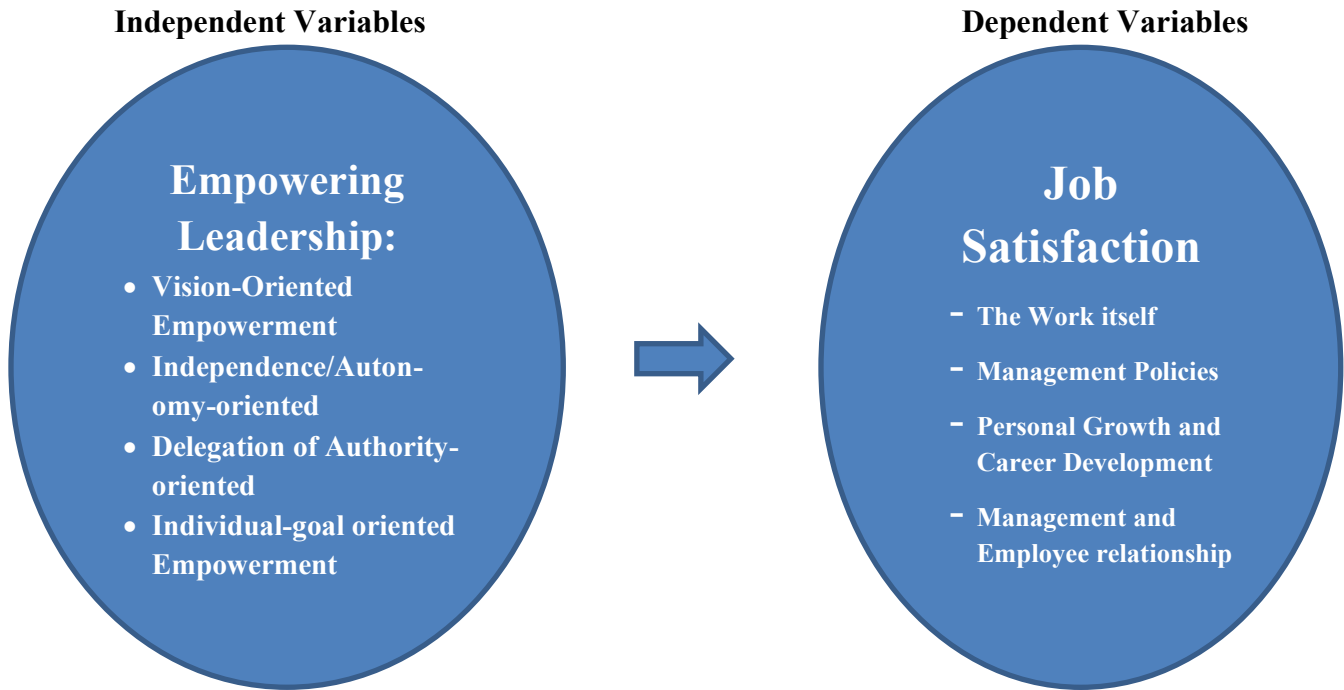
### ***Leadership styles and job satisfaction***

Job satisfaction remains a critical concern in organizational management because it directly influences both individual and organizational performance. Spector (1997) described job satisfaction as employees' level of contentment with their work environment, job, and supervision. Similarly, Sharma and Bhaskar (1991) viewed it as an emotional response developed through work experiences, while Ali (2016) explained that satisfaction arises when employees' needs, expectations, or desires are fulfilled. Conversely, dissatisfaction occurs when there is a gap between what employees expect from their jobs and what they actually experience. Measuring job satisfaction is therefore essential in determining employees' well-being and identifying factors that influence employee retention, as satisfied employees are more likely to remain with an organization (Flowers & Hughes, 1973).

The relationship between job satisfaction and organizational performance has long been established. Early work by Brayfield and Crockett (1955) highlighted its importance in improving organizational outcomes. Subsequent studies by Bakotic (2016) and Ouedraogo and Leclerc (2013) found that job satisfaction has a stronger influence on organizational performance than organizational performance has on job satisfaction. These findings were further supported by Miah (2018), who demonstrated that employee job satisfaction positively affects organizational performance in the private sector.

Leadership is another important determinant of job satisfaction. Research has shown that transformational and transactional leadership styles positively influence employees' satisfaction (Medley & Larochelle, 1995; Haider & Riaz, 2010). Likewise, empowering leadership has been found to enhance both job satisfaction and performance (Fuller et al., 1999; Furlonger, 2000). According to Dhamija et al. (2018), empowering leadership promotes satisfaction by improving the work itself, management policies, opportunities for personal growth and career development, management–employee relationships, and employee empowerment. Employees are more satisfied when their work matches their abilities, encourages creativity, develops new skills, and recognizes their contributions. Satisfaction is also strengthened by supportive organizational policies, opportunities for career advancement, employee participation in decision-making, open communication, trust between management and employees, and a work environment that prioritizes both organizational success and employee well-being (Dhamija et al., 2018).

## 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)

**Figure 1: Independent and dependent variables describe the influence of independent variables on the dependent variable:** when the experimenter manipulates the independent variables, this may affect the dependent variable (McLeod, 2019). In this regard, the conceptual frameworks reflect the study's theory. It depicts the correlation between the two variables, showing that empowering leadership affects job satisfaction.

## Statement of the problem

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

1. What is the empowering leadership style of heads of the College in terms of: Vision-oriented empowerment
  - a. Independence/autonomy
  - b. Delegation of Authority
  - c. Individual goal-oriented empowerment
2. What is the job satisfaction of employees in terms of
  - a. the nature of work
  - b. Management policies
  - c. Personal growth and development
  - d. Management, and employee relationship
3. Is there a relationship between empowering leadership and job satisfaction?

## ***Hypothesis***

A study has found a correlation between empowering leadership and job satisfaction, as noted in Haider and Riaz (2010) and Furlonger (2000). Thus, the current study hypothesizes a correlation between an empowering leadership style and employees' job satisfaction.

## ***Scope and delimitation of the study***

The study limits its investigation to the relationship between empowering leadership styles, along with vision-oriented empowerment, independence/autonomy, 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 to the variables identified herein.

## ***Research methodology***

The research methodology is the specific procedures by which the study is carried out scientifically and is usually the basis for determining the quality and validity of the research (Leedy, 1974). Conducting quality research demands correct procedures or methodology in carrying out the investigation. Therefore, good research must adopt a specific research design and include the study locale, where the study is conducted, and its population. Further, it should have a clear procedure for gathering the data, the instruments used to gather it, and, finally, the statistical tools for analyzing it.

## ***Research design***

This research is quantitative and therefore used descriptive assessment and a descriptive correlational research design. According to Baht (2020), descriptive research is a “research method that describes the characteristics of the population or the phenomena that are studied. It focuses more on the “what” of the research subject rather than the “why” of the research subject” (para. 1). This research is designed to determine the level of empowering leadership styles of office heads or managers and their effect on the employees' job satisfaction. Ariola (2006), as cited by Abun (2019), contends that descriptive research describes what appears in data collected through questionnaires and statistical treatment. It is also used to describe profiles, frequency distribution, and characteristics of people, situations, phenomena, or relationship variables. In short, it describes “what is” about the data.

Concerning the current study, the descriptive correlational method was deployed. The study assesses the level of moral leadership and its effect on employees' morality.

## ***The locale of the study***

The study was conducted at a Catholic college in Ilocos Norte, a province in the northern part of Luzon, Philippines, adjacent to Ilocos Sur.

## ***Population***

The study included all administrators and employees of the college. Using total enumeration sampling, all 130 employees, including department heads, were selected as respondents.

## ***Data gathering instruments***

Data were collected using questionnaires. The researcher developed the questionnaire on empowering leadership, which underwent content validation by subject matter experts with at least 15 years of leadership experience and

doctoral degrees in Educational Management. The job satisfaction questionnaire was adapted from the Quality of Work-Life Factors developed by Dhamija et al. (2018).

### ***Data gathering procedures***

Ethical procedures were observed throughout the data collection process. The researcher first sought permission from the College President to administer the questionnaires. Upon approval, the researcher personally distributed the questionnaires to the administrators and employees and invited them to participate in the study. The retrieval of the completed questionnaires was coordinated with the President's representative, with assistance from the college's employees and faculty.

### ***Ethical considerations***

The study adhered to established ethical standards. Permission and informed consent were obtained from the participants before the distribution of the questionnaires. The study did not involve human or animal experimentation.

### ***Statistical treatment of data***

In line with the descriptive-correlational research design, both descriptive and inferential statistics were employed. Descriptive statistics, specifically the weighted mean, were used to determine the level of administrators' empowering leadership styles as perceived by employees. Inferential statistics, using correlation analysis, were applied to examine the relationship between empowering leadership styles and employees' job satisfaction.

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

| Statistical Range | Descriptive Interpretation |
|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 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 |

## ***Data presentation and analysis***

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

***Problem 1: What is the empowering leadership style of administrators of the college in terms of***  
***: a. Vision-oriented empowerment***  
***b. Independence/autonomy***  
***c. Delegation of Authority***  
***d. Individual goal-oriented empowerment***

**Table 1. Empowering leadership style of administrators of the college in terms of the vision**

| <b><i>Indicators</i></b>                                                                      | <b>Mean</b> | <b>DR</b> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-----------|
| 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 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 and 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        |
| <b>Composite Mean</b>                                                                                         | <b>2.95</b> | <b>SWA</b> |

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        |

As shown in the data, empowering leadership in terms of vision obtained a composite mean of 2.95, interpreted as somewhat agree or moderate. All indicators likewise received the same descriptive rating. This suggests that while administrators communicate the college's vision and goals to a moderate extent, employees may not be sufficiently empowered to make independent decisions aligned with these goals. Although the institutional vision is established and communicated, it may not consistently translate into employees' day-to-day responsibilities. This finding may indicate a tendency toward bureaucratic leadership, where administrators closely supervise subordinates rather than entrusting them with greater autonomy. As a result, faculty and staff may have limited confidence in their ability to take ownership of departmental goals (Maqbool et al., 2024; Abun et al., 2021; Sarwar et al., 2022). Such misalignment between administrators and employees can reduce organizational efficiency (Lavoie, 2017) and weaken employees' motivation and job satisfaction when they lack a clear understanding of the institution's direction (Mahmood & Rehman, 2015).

**Table 2. Empowering leadership style of heads of the college in terms of independence/autonomy**

| <i>Indicators</i>                                                                                       | <b>Mean</b> | <b>DR</b>  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|------------|
| 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        |
| <b>Composite Mean</b>                                                                                   | <b>2.99</b> | <b>SWA</b> |

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

Similarly, empowering leadership in terms of independence or autonomy obtained a composite mean of 2.99, interpreted as somewhat agree or moderate. All indicators also received the same descriptive rating. This finding suggests that administrators moderately empower employees to exercise independence and autonomy in carrying

out their duties and responsibilities. Consequently, employees may have limited opportunities to make independent decisions or take ownership of their work. According to Harris (2019), insufficient autonomy can negatively affect both employee performance and overall job satisfaction.

**Table 3. Empowering leadership Style of heads of the College in terms of delegation of authority**

| <i>Indicators</i>                                                                                                                    | <b>Mean</b> | <b>DR</b>  |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|------------|
| 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        |
| <b>Composite Mean</b>                                                                                                                | <b>3.04</b> | <b>SWA</b> |

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

As presented in the table, empowering leadership in terms of **delegation of authority** obtained a composite mean of **3.04**, interpreted as "**somewhat agree**" or **moderate**. All indicators likewise received the same descriptive rating. This finding suggests that administrators moderately delegate authority, allowing employees limited opportunities to make decisions and carry out responsibilities independently. While centralized leadership can provide a clear chain of command, unified direction, cost efficiency, and consistent work quality, excessive centralization may also foster bureaucracy, delay decision-making, and reduce employee commitment (Wale, 2020). As emphasized by Sotrin (2017), effective leaders should know when to delegate authority and transition from merely performing tasks to leading and empowering others.

**Table 4. Empowering leadership style of heads of the college in terms of individual goal**

| <i>Indicators</i>                                                                                          | <b>Mean</b> | <b>DR</b>  |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|------------|
| 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 jobs.      | 2.92        | SWA        |
| <b>Composite Mean</b>                                                                                      | <b>3.03</b> | <b>SWA</b> |

Source: Bennis and Nanus (1985, 2007); Searle et al. (2018)

Empowerment can also be promoted by assigning employees clear individual goals. As shown in the data, empowering leadership in terms of individual goals obtained a composite mean of 3.03, interpreted as "somewhat agree" or moderate. All indicators likewise received the same descriptive rating. This finding suggests that administrators moderately empower employees by assigning individual goals and recognizing outstanding performance. While employees are given responsibilities to accomplish, opportunities for greater ownership and recognition remain limited. According to Gallo (2011), assigning clear individual goals aligned with organizational objectives encourages employees to work independently while ensuring that their progress is regularly monitored.

**Table 5. Summary of the empowering leadership style of heads of the College**

| 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        |
| <b>Overall Mean</b>                               | <b>3.00</b> | <b>SWA</b> |

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

The summary table shows that the overall empowering leadership style of the college heads obtained a composite mean of **3.00**, interpreted as **"somewhat agree"** or **moderate**. This indicates that administrators demonstrate a moderate level of empowering leadership. Similarly, all four dimensions received the same descriptive rating: vision-oriented empowerment (2.95), independence/autonomy (2.99), delegation of authority (3.04), and individual goals (3.03).

These findings suggest that administrators moderately empower employees across the four dimensions. Employees perceive that they are only moderately guided by the institution's vision and mission, provided with autonomy in performing their duties, entrusted with decision-making authority, and assigned clear individual goals. Overall, administrators share authority and encourage employee participation, but have not fully maximized empowering leadership practices. Research indicates that empowering leadership enhances employee performance, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction (Lee et al., 2018). Conversely, insufficient empowerment can leave employees with limited authority, resources, and opportunities to influence their work and contribute effectively to organizational goals (Tveiten, 2021; Zaremba et al., 2024; Santos et al., 2018).

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

- a. the nature of work*
- b. Management policies*
- c. Personal growth and development*
- d. management, and employee relationship*

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

| Indicators                                                                | 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 my 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 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        |
| <b>Composite Mean</b>                                                | <b>3.62</b> | <b>A</b> |

Source: Dhamija et al., (2018).

As shown in the table, employees' job satisfaction in terms of the nature of work obtained a composite mean of 3.62, interpreted as "agree" or high. All indicators likewise received the same descriptive rating. This finding indicates that employees are generally satisfied with their work because it aligns with their qualifications, skills, experience, and aspirations while providing opportunities to enhance their knowledge and competencies. Employees also appreciate the support they receive from management through adequate work-related information, recognition of their ideas, and respect for their efforts and initiatives. Previous studies have consistently shown that high job satisfaction contributes to improved employee performance (Abdulkhaliq & Mohammadali, 2019; Fadlallah, 2015; Khan et al., 2012; Ezeanyim et al., 2019; Okeke, 2020).

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

| <i>Indicators</i>                                                             | <b>Mean</b> | <b>DR</b>  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|------------|
| 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 in improving employees' productivity.       | 3.14        | SWA        |
| 10. Policies promote open communication between the management and employees. | 2.95        | SWA        |
| <b>Composite Mean</b>                                                         | <b>3.17</b> | <b>SWA</b> |

Source: Dhamija et al. (2018).

Supportive management policies are essential for promoting employee welfare and a positive work environment. As shown in the table, job satisfaction in terms of management policies obtained a composite mean of 3.17, interpreted as "somewhat agree" or moderate. All indicators likewise received the same descriptive rating. This suggests that employees are only moderately satisfied with existing management policies. Specifically, they perceive that organizational policies only moderately promote a conducive work environment, employee welfare, career growth, professional development, organizational effectiveness, productivity, and open communication. According to Mamoni (2018), management plays a vital role in creating a workplace that fosters employee well-being and motivation. Conversely, ineffective human resource policies can reduce job satisfaction, weaken employee engagement and productivity, increase turnover, and ultimately raise organizational costs (Keltu, 2024; Srihita et al., 2026).

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

| <i>Indicators</i>                                                                                             | <b>Mean</b> | <b>DR</b> |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-----------|
| 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 a job to learn new skills.                                                  | 3.60        | A         |
| 5. The management provides seminars 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 feedback 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         |
| <b>Composite Mean</b>                                                                                         | <b>3.57</b> | <b>A</b>  |

Source: Dhamija et al., (2018).

Organizational growth is closely linked to employees' personal growth and development (Dobrai et al., 2014). As shown in the data, job satisfaction in terms of personal growth and development obtained a composite mean of 3.57, interpreted as "agree" or high. All indicators likewise received the same descriptive rating. This finding indicates that employees are highly satisfied with the opportunities provided for their personal and professional development. They perceive that management supports their growth through development programs, clear communication of related policies, job rotation, seminars and workshops, participation in decision-making, feedback and counseling, and a genuine interest in employee development. Consistent with this finding, Hameed and Waheed (2011) reported a positive relationship between employee development and organizational performance and emphasized the importance of investing in employees' personal and professional growth.

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

| <i>Indicators</i>                                                                            | <b>Mean</b> | <b>DR</b>  |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|------------|
| 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 the 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 the 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        |
| <b>Composite Mean</b>                                                                        | <b>2.98</b> | <b>SWA</b> |

Source: Dhamija et al. (2018).

A positive relationship between management and employees is essential for organizational success (Greer, 2020). As shown in the data, job satisfaction in terms of management–employee relationship obtained a composite mean of 2.98, interpreted as "somewhat agree" or moderate. All indicators likewise received the same descriptive rating.

This finding suggests that employees are only moderately satisfied with their relationship with management. Specifically, they perceive that communication regarding organizational policies, employee involvement in decision-making, communication of the institution's vision and mission, organizational communication, and support for employee development are only moderately practiced. A moderate rating reflects a functional but average working relationship that allows daily operations to continue but lacks strong interpersonal trust, open communication, and deeper employee engagement (Dawson, 2013; Huang et al., 2024). It also indicates that employees may feel supported in some areas but undervalued in others, resulting in relationships based more on formal interactions than on a shared organizational vision or commitment (Schön Persson et al., 2018). As emphasized by Craig (2017), strong management–employee relationships are fundamental to organizational success.

**Table 10. Summary of the 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        |
| <b>Overall Mean</b>                       | <b>3.33</b> | <b>SWA</b> |

Source: Dhamija etal. (2018).

The summary table shows that overall employee job satisfaction obtained a composite mean of 3.33, interpreted as "somewhat agree" or moderate. This indicates that employees are moderately satisfied with their jobs. Among the four dimensions, employees reported high satisfaction with the nature of work (3.62) and personal growth and development (3.57), while management policies (3.17) and management–employee relationships (2.98) received moderate satisfaction ratings.

Overall, the findings suggest that employees are reasonably satisfied with their jobs but that there remains considerable room for improvement. While the workplace adequately meets employees' basic needs, it may lack the conditions needed to strengthen engagement, commitment, and loyalty (Durrani et al., 2026; Koncar & Helic, 2020; Gazi et al., 2024). These results highlight the need for management to strengthen organizational policies, enhance management–employee relationships, sustain opportunities for personal growth, and further improve the quality of work. Previous studies have consistently shown that job dissatisfaction can negatively affect organizational performance and long-term success (Nwobia & Aljohani, 2017; Shaikh et al., 2019; Henne & Lock, 1985).

**Problem 3: 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 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/<br>Autonomy- Oriented<br>empowerment   | Pearson<br>Correlation | .620** | .748** | .748** | .590** | .791** |
|                                                      | Sig. (2-tailed)        | .000   | .000   | .000   | .000   | .000   |
|                                                      | N                      | 130    | 130    | 130    | 130    | 130    |
| Delegation of<br>Authority – Oriented<br>empowerment | Pearson<br>Correlation | .608** | .589** | .638** | .505** | .685** |
|                                                      | Sig. (2-tailed)        | .000   | .000   | .000   | .000   | .000   |
|                                                      | N                      | 130    | 130    | 130    | 130    | 130    |
| Individual goal-<br>oriented<br>empowerment          | Pearson<br>Correlation | .120   | .124   | .177*  | .182*  | .178*  |
|                                                      | Sig. (2-tailed)        | .174   | .161   | .044   | .039   | .043   |
|                                                      | N                      | 130    | 130    | 130    | 130    | 130    |
| Empowering<br>Leadership - As a<br>Whole             | Pearson<br>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).*

This table shows strong, mostly significant correlations between empowering leadership and job satisfaction. The relationship between empowering leadership and overall job satisfaction is  $r = .779$ ,  $p < .001$ , indicating a strong positive correlation. It means that the more employees perceive their heads practice empowering leadership, the higher their job satisfaction. This alone already supports your hypothesis. All 4 factors are significant, but Vision-Mission, Delegation, and Autonomy are the big drivers. Individual goal-setting matters, but much less. Looking across the row for each leadership factor, the highest r-values are: **Nature of Work**:  $r = .806^*$  with Vision-Mission. When leaders tie work to vision, employees like the work itself more. **Management/Policies**:  $r = .750$  with Vision-Mission. Clear vision makes management policies feel fairer. **Personal Growth**:  $r = .748$  with Delegation. Giving authority/delegating directly boosts growth opportunities. **Weakest link**: Individual goal-oriented empowerment correlates only weakly with all 4 satisfaction factors, with the highest being .182 with Management. So, this factor has a limited impact compared to the other 3.

In short, the results revealed a strong positive and significant relationship between empowering leadership and job satisfaction,  $r(128) = .779$ ,  $p < .001$ . Among the dimensions, vision/mission-oriented empowerment showed the strongest correlation with job satisfaction ( $r = .796$ ,  $p < .001$ ), followed by delegation of authority ( $r = .668$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and independence/autonomy ( $r = .624$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Individual goal-oriented empowerment was also significant but weak ( $r = .173$ ,  $p = .050$ ). This indicates that when college heads clearly articulate vision and mission, delegate authority, and allow autonomy, employees report higher satisfaction, particularly with the nature of their work and management policies. The findings suggest that vision-driven and autonomy-granting leadership behaviors are more effective in enhancing employee job satisfaction than individual goal-setting alone.”

## Results and discussion

The findings revealed a significant positive relationship between empowering leadership and employees' job satisfaction, indicating that employee satisfaction is influenced not only by compensation and recognition but also by the extent to which employees are trusted, empowered, and involved in the organization. Employees are more satisfied when leaders clearly communicate the institution's vision and mission, grant autonomy, delegate authority, and provide meaningful responsibilities aligned with organizational goals. Empowerment allows employees to take ownership of their work, make informed decisions, and contribute more effectively to

organizational success. These findings are consistent with previous studies showing that delegation enhances organizational effectiveness and employee performance (Hammadat et al., 2015), while performance management based on clearly defined goals improves employee satisfaction (Rahman & Islam, 2010). The results further suggest that college administrators should strengthen vision-sharing, delegation of authority, and employee autonomy to enhance job satisfaction, thereby ultimately improving teacher performance and contributing to better student outcomes (Baluyos et al., 2019; Abun, 2021; Salamat et al., 2013).

These findings also support and extend the Empowerment Theory of Rappaport (1981), Kanter's Structural Empowerment Theory, and Homans' Social Exchange Theory. The strong positive correlation between empowering leadership and job satisfaction ( $r = .779$ ) confirms that when leaders share power through a clear vision, autonomy, and delegated authority, employees reciprocate with higher levels of job satisfaction. The study further demonstrates that these theories are applicable within the context of Philippine higher education, particularly in mission-driven Catholic colleges, where alignment with the institution's vision and mission is central to organizational identity and employee engagement.

From a practical standpoint, the findings suggest that improving job satisfaction requires leaders to move beyond goal-setting and place greater emphasis on meaning-making and power-sharing. Higher education institutions should integrate empowering leadership behaviors—particularly vision-sharing, delegation of authority, and support for employee autonomy—into leadership development programs, performance evaluation systems, and employee engagement initiatives. Incorporating these behaviors into leadership assessment and regularly monitoring them through employee feedback can help strengthen leadership effectiveness and foster a more engaged and satisfied workforce.

The study, however, is limited by its relatively small population and its focus on a single institution. As such, the findings cannot be generalized to all higher education institutions or organizational settings. Future research should involve larger samples and more diverse institutional contexts to further validate and expand the present findings.

## Conclusion

The administrators' empowering leadership indicates that empowering practices need further strengthening. Similarly, employees' overall job satisfaction suggests room for improvement. The results also revealed that employees are more satisfied when they experience greater empowerment in the workplace. Therefore, the study confirms that empowering leadership is a significant predictor of employees' job satisfaction, supporting the study's hypothesis.

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