



## **Correlating the School Climate and Teacher Leadership of Catholic Schools in Antique, Philippines**

**Joel M. Bual<sup>1\*</sup> and Dennis V. Madrigal<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Pandan Bay Institute, Inc., 5712 Pandan, Antique, Philippines.

<sup>2</sup>University of Negros Occidental-Recoletos, 6100 Bacolod City, Negros Occidental, Philippines.

### **Authors' contributions**

. This paper was a collaborative work and effort of both authors. Author JMB is the main proponent who wrote the paper, designed the study, and performed analysis and interpretation of the data through the guidance and recommendations of author DVM as his adviser. Both authors have read and approved the manuscript for submission.

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### **ABSTRACT**

**Aims:** This study assessed the degree of school climate and extent of teacher leadership of Catholic schools in Antique, Philippines. It also investigated the difference in the school climate when assessors were grouped according to the designation. Likewise, it correlated the teachers' age, sex, employment status, educational attainment, and professional status with the teacher leadership. Finally, it determined the relationship between school climate and teacher leadership.

**Methodology:** The study utilized the descriptive-comparative and correlational design. The respondents were 486 administrators, teachers, and students of these Catholic schools during 2020-2021. It employed the adopted school climate questionnaire and standardized teacher leadership scale in gathering the data. In data analysis, Mean, Standard Deviation, Frequency Count, Percentage Distribution, Rank, Kruskal Wallis, and Spearman Rank Correlation were used.

**Results:** Generally, the school climate (M=2.87, SD=0.56) is very satisfactory with relationship (M=3.02, SD=0.66) as the highest and physical resources aspect (M=2.73, SD=0.69), the lowest. The teacher leadership (M=3.03, SD=0.56) is practiced to a great extent with community (M=3.16,

SD=0.62) as the highest and policy (M=2.96, SD=0.65) and professional learning (M=2.95, SD=0.64), the lowest. It also showed that there was no difference in school climate assessment [H(1)=0.688,  $P=.407$ ]. Regarding the correlation, there was no relationship between age [ $\rho(153)=-0.020$ ,  $P=.808$ ], sex [ $\rho(153)=0.076$ ,  $P=.350$ ], employment status [ $\rho(153)=0.036$ ,  $P=.657$ ], educational attainment [ $\rho(153)=0.140$ ,  $P=.082$ ], professional status [ $\rho(153)=-0.028$ ,  $P=.730$ ] and teacher leadership. Meanwhile, there was relationship between the school climate and teacher leadership [ $\rho(484)=0.605$ ,  $P=.000$ ]. The top school climate challenges are teaching strategies, academic loading, and physical environment. In terms of teacher leadership, the top issues are teacher evaluation, professional development support, communicative relationship, and teacher involvement and recognition.

**Conclusion:** Establishment of a healthy and supportive Catholic school environment is vitally essential both in maintaining the school climate and in mobilizing the teachers in their exercise of leadership.

*Keywords: Educational management; school climate; teacher leadership; quantitative; Antique Catholic schools; Philippines.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

School climate is essential in educational success and teaching performance [1]. If schools value the environment, the members unreservedly perform their responsibilities [2]. Correspondingly, an affirmative atmosphere influences the teachers' instruction, commitment, and leadership embodiment [3]. Thus, the environment impacts their practice of leadership [4].

Naturally, teachers are leaders of the school and the community [5]. As leaders, they influence change among school members [6]. They are also potential sources of leadership since principals nowadays find it difficult to perform their complex responsibilities [7]. However, most teachers do not perceive themselves as leaders because they are confined to classrooms, and leadership is for principals [8]. Additionally, the schools' hierarchy affects their non-involvement in leading where teachers are at the bottom following directives [9]. Hence, their leadership has not been materialized and remained a concept [10].

Meanwhile, the changing climate challenges Philippine Catholic schools due to the educational reforms that demand heavy teaching work [11]. Further, the teachers' exodus to other schools affects the teachers' performance and competence resulting in hiring new and unqualified instructors [12]. Hence, it compromises their exercise of teacher leadership [10].

In the Philippines, researchers conducted studies on school climate in elementary schools [13],

public schools [14], and private schools [15]. On the one hand, Alegado [9] and Oracion [10] conducted qualitative studies on teacher leadership in public schools. Meanwhile, researchers conducted similar studies on the correlation of school climate and teacher leadership in Turkey [4] and America [2]. However, there has been limited literature on these variables and their correlation, especially in Philippine Catholic schools. This is the gap which this study would like to fill in.

### 1.1 Research Problem

This study assessed the degree of school climate of Catholic schools in Antique, Philippines, in terms of safety, security, and peace and order, teaching and learning, relationship, physical resources, and maintenance of cleanliness and sanitation as assessed by the administrators, teachers, and students during 2020-2021. It also measured the extent of teacher leadership in terms of association, professional learning, assessment, instruction, community, and policy. Meanwhile, it identified the challenges of the school climate and teacher leadership. It also investigated the difference in the school climate when assessors were grouped according to the designation. Likewise, it correlated the teachers' age, sex, employment status, educational attainment, and professional status with the teacher leadership. Finally, it determined the relationship between school climate and teacher leadership.

### 1.2 Theoretical Framework

The study perceived that the school climate influences teacher leadership. The theoretical

assumption of this study was anchored on the distributed leadership theory. This approach perceives leadership as a holistic system of practice consisting of a sustainable interactive play of the leaders, followers, and the situation as three components of organizational success. Here, the organization succeeds when leaders and followers share leadership in participatory approach [16]. Aside from this, the context or situation is also essential in establishing relationship and necessary resources among these members since they act depending on the kind of environment [17]. Meanwhile, in mobilizing teachers to collaborative leadership, this principle holds that the organizational leader plays a significant role in providing them with a healthy and supportive environment [16].

In the context of Catholic schools in Antique, Philippines, the collaboration of the administrators, teachers, and the environment is essential in the success of their objectives. Similarly, this is participatory in nature and not administrative to increase the wide scale of leading since leadership is everybody's responsibility [16]. However, for teachers to participate, lead, and perform, it is necessary that they should be provided with a healthy and supportive environment. Hence, the administrators' role is vital in establishing this supportive working atmosphere to ensure the relationship and instructional resources needed in the success of leadership practice and Catholic education [17]. Lastly, the findings may serve as a basis in continuously improving the Catholic schools vis-à-vis the offering of quality education.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Research Design

The study employed a quantitative design, particularly descriptive-comparative and correlational approaches. The descriptive process determined the degree of school climate, the extent of teacher leadership, and challenges encountered on the two variables. The comparative approach compared the school climate assessment of assessors when grouped according to the designation. The correlational approach investigated the correlation between the teachers' demographics and teacher leadership. Also, it determined the relationship between school climate and teacher leadership.

### 2.2 Respondents

The respondents of the study were the administrators, teachers, and grade 12 students of the Catholic schools in the Province of Antique, Philippines. It took the whole population of 11 administrators while stratified sampling for 155 teachers and 320 students. Table 1 presents the respondents' profile.

**Table 1. Demographic profile of the respondents**

Variable	f	%
Designation		
Principal	11	2.3
Teachers	155	31.9
Age		
Young	74	15.2
Old	81	16.7
Sex		
Male	64	13.2
Female	91	18.7
Employment Status		
Probationary	84	17.3
Permanent	71	14.6
Educational Attainment		
Bachelor's degree	138	28.4
Master's degree	17	3.5
Professional Status		
Licensed	136	28.0
Non-Licensed	19	3.9
Grade 12 Students	320	65.8
Total	486	100

### 2.3 Research Instrument

The data gathering utilized an adopted school climate questionnaire and checklist from Cabatbat and Carrera [14] using the scale: 1-moderately satisfactory, 2-satisfactory, 3-very satisfactory, and 4-excellent. In teacher leadership, the study employed a standardized questionnaire developed by Xie et al. [5] using the scale: 1-very poor extent, 2-poor extent, 3-great extent, and 4-very great extent. In terms of the teacher leadership challenges, researcher-made checklist was employed.

### 2.4 Data Analysis

In analyzing the data, Mean and Standard deviation determined the degree of school climate and extent of teacher leadership. Meanwhile, Frequency Count, Percentage Distribution, and Rank identified the challenges of the two variables. Using the Kolmogorov-

Smirnov and Shapiro Wilk Tests, the normality results showed that the data for school climate [KS=0.055,  $P=0.001$ ] [SW=.990,  $P=.002$ ] and teacher leadership [KS=0.053,  $p=.002$ ] [SW=.984,  $p=.000$ ] were not normally distributed. Hence, it justified the use of Kruskal Wallis and Spearman Rank Correlation. Kruskal Wallis compared the difference in the school climate. On the other hand, Spearman rank correlation correlated both the demographics with teacher leadership and school climate with teacher leadership.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 3.1 Degree of School Climate

School climate refers to the character of school life manifested in the members' shared values and practices [13]. It also reflects the availability of a healthy environment, quality instruction, interactive relationship, and adequate resources [14]. Table 2 presents the degree of school climate of Antique Catholic schools. Generally, the school climate (M=2.87, SD= 0.56) is very satisfactory. All domains were rated very satisfactory, with the relationship (M=3.02, SD= 0.66) as the highest and physical resources and maintenance of cleanliness and sanitation (M=2.73, SD= 0.69) as the lowest.

The overall rating indicates that the Catholic school environment is favorable for working and learning [1]. Also, the safety, relationship, quality teaching, and facilities are established among school members to perform their responsibilities [13]. Elaborately, the students' high satisfaction rating of the services of Antique Catholic schools impacts the high school climate rating, as supported by Laureta [18]. Also, the Catholic teachers' high job satisfaction rating of these schools highly influenced their assessment [19]. In support, studies were comparing the climate in private and other schools. Unanimously, all favored the private institutions. In Shakeel and DeAngelis [20], one advantage of private schools is their fewer climate restrictions making the members feel safe and comfortable. Krommendyk [21] supports that the private school environment is healthier than other educational institutions, especially principal leadership, collegiality, relationship, satisfaction, and discipline. With these, the assessors gave a high climate rating despite the challenges [20].

Accordingly, these findings imply continuous improvement among the Catholic schools'

operation and services to ensure an excellent school climate rating [18]. Bual and Madrigal [22] and Banusing and Bual [23] assessed the quality of Antique Catholic education. They recommend these schools to improve in the overall operation for not achieving the highest standard rating. Correspondingly, the very satisfactory rating of the current study partially attests to these results [22,23], and by not achieving the excellent climate rating, these schools indeed need improvement in their services. Thus, this implies using the findings and output of this study as references in ensuring the positive environment and the continuous choice of the stakeholders of Catholic schools [18].

Meanwhile, relationship is one of the aspects that is essential in the success of the educational environment [13]. This dimension refers to the schools' promotion of respect for diversity, collaboration, morale, and connectedness among school members which are necessary in the establishment of a sustainable relationship [13,14]. Regarding this aspect as the highest rated domain, the Antique Catholic schools strongly manifest an environment that values high consideration of individual differences, conduct and discipline, and democratic relation among members [14]. Correspondingly, the incomparable bond of connection among school members influenced everybody's high rating, as Ballarta and Roberto [19] and Krommendyk [21] supported. In Maney et al. [24], when the relationship is intact, the environment becomes favorable and healthy. The high rating of this aspect implies that these schools should maintain or even strengthen the relationship among members to continuously sustain their healthy environment [13]. Thus, programs that elicit strong relationships should be organized [23].

Lastly, the physical resources and maintenance of cleanliness and sanitation as one of the school climate dimensions is reflected in the availability and quality assurance of the instructional facilities which are necessary in the achievement of institutional objectives [14]. Relative to this aspect as the lowest rated domain, it clearly indicates that the improvement among Antique Catholic schools relative to four domains should focus more on the maintenance and enhancement of their physical environment and facilities [13,14]. Maintenance is necessary since they deal with the members' health and safety [13]. For Teague [25], when the environment is safe and healthy, successful

instruction is guaranteed. Meanwhile, the students' assessment who outnumbered other assessors influenced the rating of this aspect. Van der Westhuizen et al. [26] found that the students are most affected by the kind of facilities compared to other members since they primarily utilize them. The availability of resources among Catholic schools is also affected by their financial instability that is dependent on enrollment. This instability compromises the maintenance and provisions of the facilities [27]. Thus, sustainable revenues are encouraged among these schools to excellently provide the environmental safety and adequate instructional resources [23].

### 3.2 Extent of Teacher Leadership

Teacher leadership is manifested in the sharing of leadership among administrators and teachers in promoting a wide-scale of leading towards school success [6]. It is also a skill of influencing the students and colleagues to go beyond their classrooms [5]. Table 3 presents the teacher leadership of Antique Catholic schools. As a whole (M=3.03, SD=0.56), the teacher leadership was rated great extent. All domains were rated great extent, with the community (M=3.16, SD=0.62) as the highest and policy (M=2.96, SD=0.65) and professional learning (M=2.95, SD=0.64) as the lowest.

The overall rating indicates that Antique Catholic schools practice teacher leadership. The administrators also share their leadership with their teachers [6]. Further, these teachers influence their learners, co-teachers, and the community in their respective responsibilities [5]. In Oracion [10], the teachers' competence highly influences their exercise of leadership. With this, the great extent result is affected by the high teacher competence rating among these Antique Catholic schools in Jorilla and Bual [11]. Thus, this implies hiring competent teachers to

guarantee quality instruction and successful teacher leadership [10].

However, to exercise teacher leadership to an exceptional extent, Catholic schools should continuously improve in all areas [6]. Meanwhile, the common reason that impedes excellent teacher leadership is the hierarchical structure that focuses on principals [10]. Most teachers do not view themselves as leaders. They believe that leadership is for administrators only and they belong to classrooms [9]. Thus, to exceptionally mobilize them, the schools should embrace a participatory leadership approach [4]. Thus, this implies providing teachers with varied leadership opportunities to boost their skills and view themselves as leaders [10].

Teachers are leaders not only inside the classrooms or schools but also in the community [5,8]. They have the embedded duties and responsibilities to interact with the public to increase the schools' outreach and collaborative partnership with these stakeholders to ensure the institutional success. Additionally, they are also encouraged to become role model in influencing other teachers to do the same [6]. Regarding community as the highest-rated domain, it indicates that the Antique Catholic teachers highly perform leadership in reaching out to the public and encourages colleagues to follow [5]. Correspondingly, the teachers' unreserved collaborative efforts in reaching out to the community to suffice the Catholic schools' needs amid the pandemic strongly influenced the high assessment of this area [28]. As community leaders, Catholic schools expect them to continuously establish linkages with the public to sustain the institutional needs [6]. Thus, this implies providing them more opportunities to reach out to the community to ensure their leadership practice and strong Catholic school linkages [22].

**Table 2. Degree of school climate**

Variables	School Climate			Domain 1			Domain 2		
	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int
Designation									
Principal	2.93	0.35	VS	3.05	0.47	VS	3.09	0.20	VS
Teachers	2.80	0.57	VS	2.82	0.68	VS	2.96	0.56	VS
Students	2.90	0.57	VS	2.81	0.68	VS	2.96	0.69	VS
Whole	2.87	0.56	VS	2.82	0.67	VS	2.96	0.64	VS

Note: VS=Very Satisfactory; Domain 1= Safety, Security, and Peace and Order, Domain 2=Teaching and Learning

**Table 2.1 Degree of school climate**

Variables	Domain 3			Domain 4		
	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int
Designation						
Principal	3.21	0.50	VS	2.59	0.42	VS
Teachers	2.92	0.68	VS	2.61	0.71	VS
Students	3.06	0.66	VS	2.79	0.68	VS
Whole	3.02	0.66	VS	2.73	0.69	VS

Note: VS=Very Satisfactory; Domain 3=Relationship, Domain 4=Physical Resources, and Maintenance of Cleanliness and Sanitation

**Table 3. Extent of teacher leadership**

Variable	Teacher Leadership			Association			Professional Learning			
	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int	
Age										
Young	3.05	0.56	GE	3.07	0.64	GE	2.96	0.61	GE	
Old	3.02	0.56	GE	3.07	0.66	GE	2.94	0.67	GE	
Sex										
Male	2.98	0.57	GE	3.03	0.66	GE	2.89	0.66	GE	
Female	3.07	0.55	GE	3.10	0.64	GE	2.99	0.62	GE	
Employment Status										
Probationary	3.01	0.56	GE	3.03	0.67	GE	2.91	0.62	GE	
Permanent	3.06	0.56	GE	3.12	0.61	GE	3.00	0.66	GE	
Educational Attainment										
Bachelor's	3.01	0.55	GE	3.04	0.64	GE	2.92	0.62	GE	
Master's	3.26	0.55	GE	3.32	0.65	VGE	3.19	0.74	GE	
Professional Status										
Licensed	3.04	0.57	GE	3.08	0.65	GE	2.96	0.64	GE	
Non-licensed	3.00	0.47	GE	2.97	0.57	GE	2.89	0.62	GE	
Whole	3.03	0.56	GE	3.07	0.64	GE	2.95	0.64	GE	

Note: GE=Great Extent, VGE=Very Great Extent

**Table 3.1 Extent of teacher leadership**

Variable	Assessment			Instruction			Community			Policy		
	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int
Age												
Young	3.09	0.61	GE	3.03	0.60	GE	3.19	0.59	GE	3.02	0.65	GE
Old	3.15	0.57	GE	2.98	0.63	GE	3.13	0.66	GE	2.90	0.65	GE
Sex												
Male	3.06	0.60	GE	2.91	0.61	GE	3.18	0.60	GE	2.87	0.69	GE
Female	3.17	0.58	GE	3.07	0.61	GE	3.14	0.64	GE	3.02	0.61	GE
Employment Status												
Probationary	3.10	0.61	GE	2.99	0.62	GE	3.16	0.61	GE	2.96	0.63	GE
Permanent	3.15	0.57	GE	3.02	0.62	GE	3.15	0.65	GE	2.96	0.67	GE
Educational Attainment												
Bachelor's	3.09	0.59	GE	2.98	0.62	GE	3.13	0.63	GE	2.95	0.63	GE
Master's	3.40	0.51	VGE	3.23	0.51	GE	3.38	0.56	VGE	3.07	0.75	GE
Professional Status												
Licensed	3.11	0.60	GE	3.00	0.62	GE	3.16	0.65	GE	2.97	0.66	GE
Non-licensed	3.21	0.52	GE	3.02	0.58	GE	3.13	0.42	GE	2.88	0.57	GE
Whole	3.13	0.59	GE	3.01	0.61	GE	3.16	0.62	GE	2.96	0.65	GE

Note: GE=Great Extent, VGE=Very Great Extent

Meanwhile, as leaders of professional learning, the teachers are expected to be governed by research-based instruction to ensure the quality of teaching and learning [5]. Additionally, they are also expected to advance continuing teaching education to sustainably exercise leadership particularly in this domain [6]. Accordingly, this leadership aspect as one of the lowest rated domains signifies that Catholic schools should focus more improvement on providing their teachers with varied opportunities for continuous development [5]. In Roberto and Madrigal [12] and Jorilla and Bual [11], they revealed that among all areas of teaching competence of Antique Catholic teachers, their personal growth and professional development aspect is the highest. The deviating result of these two previous studies with the current paper is attributed to the incorporation of research in the teacher leadership scale, which is absent in Roberto and Madrigal [12] and Jorilla and Bual [11].

Demographically, among Antique Catholic teachers, few have master's degrees with research writing experiences. In Ulla et al. [29], few Filipino teachers engage in research due to heavy teaching loads, poor writing skills, and inadequacy of school support. Also, most do graduate schooling and research for salary and promotions only. Thus, these imply Catholic schools' encouragement and support for teachers' continuous education to encourage them to embrace research and practice leadership [11].

Teachers are also leaders in terms of decision-making and policy implementation [5]. Alegado [9] believes that teacher leadership in this aspect involves influence and mobilization of teachers and colleagues to participate in the policymaking of the schools to increase institutional improvement and success. The policy result as one of the lowest rated domains indicates that these Catholic schools should also provide their teachers more opportunities to be involved in school operation and decision-making [5]. Correspondingly, the teachers' inadequate involvement opportunities highly affect the rating. Grant et al. [8] perceived that the administrators make decisions at their level and teachers only follow their directives. They should be involved in school decisions since successful implementations require their participation [30]. Hence, this implies that these Catholic schools should recognize their teachers' involvement in the policy and decision-making to guarantee their active participation and leadership practice [6].

Regarding the very great extent rating of those with master's degrees in association, assessment, and community, the teachers' education influences these leadership aspects. In support, Alger [31] perceives that as the teacher education rises, their leadership engagement also increases. Similarly, Rupsiene and Skarbaliene [32] argue that those who participate in professional upgrading perform leadership than those not attending. Thus, these imply that these Catholic schools should continuously encourage their teachers to continue study to develop their behavior and engagement in all leadership areas [31].

### 3.3 Difference in the Degree of School Climate

Table 4 presents the difference in the degree of school climate using Kruskal Wallis. The findings showed no significant difference in their assessments [ $H(1)=0.688, P=.407$ ]. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted. The result indicates that the principals, teachers, and students share similar climate perceptions [33]. It does not support the notion that the administrators and teachers better understand the school environment since they control the activities [13,1]. Correspondingly, this signifies that all Catholic school members have responsibilities in establishing a healthy environment. Thus, Catholic schools are encouraged to provide members the opportunities to participate in environmental planning, assessment, and improvement [33].

**Table 4. Difference in the degree of school climate**

M	H	df
2.93 (0.35)	0.688	1
2.80 (0.57)		
2.90 (0.57)		

*Note: The difference is significant at  $P \leq 0.05$*

### 3.4 Relationship between the Demographics and Teacher Leadership

Table 5 presents the relationship between the demographics and teacher leadership assessment using Spearman rank correlation. The findings showed no significant relationship

between age [ $\rho(153)=-0.020$ ,  $P=.808$ ], sex [ $\rho(153)=0.076$ ,  $P=.350$ ], employment status [ $\rho(153)=0.036$ ,  $P=.657$ ], educational attainment [ $\rho(153)=0.140$ ,  $P=.082$ ], professional status [ $\rho(153)=-0.028$ ,  $P=.730$ ] and the teacher leadership. Hence, it accepted the null hypothesis.

The no correlation result indicates that these demographics do not affect the leadership practice of Antique Catholic teachers as supported by several studies [7,32,31,8]. The result also reveals that irrespective of these demographics, all teachers have the potentials to lead. Accordingly, these schools should not use these demographics as criteria in designating them to leadership [7]. Meanwhile, there are other factors which influence successful teacher leadership practice among Catholic schools. Nguyen et al. [3] perceived that the environment, structures, principal leadership, and relationships strongly affect the teacher leadership practice. In the Philippines, Oracion [10] believes that the teachers' leadership background, competence, motivations, principal support, and environment strongly impact their leadership practice. With these, the potent criterion for teacher leadership in Catholic schools is primarily environmental and not demographical [3]. Thus, these imply that Catholic schools should provide their teachers with a healthy environment to elicit their successful leadership practice [10].

**Table 5. Relationship between demographics and teacher leadership**

Variable	$\rho$	df	P
Age	-0.020	153	.808
Sex	0.076	153	.350
Employment Status	0.036	153	.657
Educational Attainment	0.140	153	.082
Professional Status	-0.028	153	.730

*Note: Correlation is significant at  $P \leq 0.05$*

### 3.5 Relationship between the School Climate and Teacher Leadership

Table 6 presents the relationship between the school climate and teacher leadership using Spearman rank correlation. The findings showed a significant relationship [ $\rho(484)=0.605$ ,  $P=.000$ ]. Hence, it rejected the null hypothesis.

The result indicates that the Catholic school environment indeed affects the leadership practice of teachers [2,4]. The high ratings of the learning environment domain of Antique Catholic

schools in the studies of Roberto and Madrigal [12] and Jorilla and Bual [11] relative to teachers' competence and performance influence the result of the correlation. Correspondingly, the result signifies the need to continuously establish a healthy Catholic school environment to empower the teachers to lead and perform their responsibilities [9]. Nguyen et al. [3] perceived that a healthy school environment with collegiality, collaboration, shared goals, and trust guarantees successful teacher leadership practice. Additionally, Cabatbat and Carrera [14] argued that the schools improve their teacher quality, recruitment, retention, and leadership when a supportive environment is available. Thus, Catholic schools need to provide their teachers with a healthy climate to mobilize them to perform, participate, and lead [10].

**Table 6. Relationship between school climate and teacher leadership**

Variable	$\rho$	df	p
School Climate x Leadership	0.605*	484	0.000

*Note: Correlation is significant at  $P \leq 0.05$*

### 3.6 Challenges on School Climate

Generally, there has been a diverging result between the Catholic school climate assessment and the challenges. With the physical resources aspect rating at the bottom of other areas, this domain expects to top the challenges. But the top issues are on teaching and learning. The students' assessment who outnumbered other assessors affected the divergence. These learners are more affected by their teachers' performance than other domains because of their regular contact [34]. Hence, this signifies the need to regularly appraise the Catholic school teachers' performance, which includes the perspectives of the students, to ensure a quality learning environment [1].

Table 7 presents the school climate challenges among Antique Catholic schools. The top issues are teaching strategies, academic loading, and the physical environment. Minor problems are schools' collaboration with stakeholders, professional development, safety and security, and students' collaborative learning.

Elaborately, the exodus of qualified teachers to public schools affects the challenge of teaching strategies [12]. Inevitably, Catholic schools hire new and unqualified teachers that resort to



traditional teaching, which compromises the quality of instruction [23]. Hence, these schools are encouraged to hire qualified teachers and retain them to ensure a quality teaching-learning environment [12].

Meanwhile, the teachers' non-involvement in load allocation impacts the issue of academic loading. In Wadesango and Bayaga [35], they argue that when teachers are given subjects, not within their expertise, they become less competent, teach the wrong way, and underperform the profession. Hence, this signifies that Catholic schools should objectively distribute the loads to teachers [35].

Regarding the physical environment, the Catholic schools' financial instability has to do with inadequate facilities and maintenance [27]. Thus, they should improve their revenue to satisfy these needs [23]. Meanwhile, the principals' complex responsibilities affect the lack of supervision and maintenance of the school resources. Hence, delegating responsibility to teachers is necessary for the quality assurance of the facilities and the environment [27].

On the other hand, the incomparable and unique Catholic school characteristics affect the least identified climate challenges [21]. Regarding the collaboration with stakeholders, the high rating of Catholic schools' linkages to the community in Bual and Madrigal [22] influenced the assessment of this slightest issue. Relative to safety and security, the high rating of the learning environment of Antique Catholic schools, which includes the safety and students' discipline in Banusing and Bual [23], affected the result. Meanwhile, the teachers' high ratings on personal growth and professional development among Antique Catholic schools in Jorilla and Bual [11] have to do with mentoring and professional development results. Lastly, regarding the students' collaborative learning atmosphere, this is accredited to the high rating of the learner development aspect of Antique Catholic schools in Bual and Madrigal [22] which includes providing cooperative learning opportunities among students. Hence, these imply the need to continuously maintain or improve these assets to ensure a positive environment for Catholic schools [18].

**Table 7. Challenges on school climate**

	<b>Challenges</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
1	Traditional approach in teaching	250	51.4
2	Teachers teaching not within their expertise	187	38.5
3	Inadequacy of instructional facilities	171	35.2
4	Teachers' overloaded work	155	31.9
5	Unsafe, unhealthy, and unclean grounds and facilities	132	27.2
6	Inadequate and outdated library resources	123	25.3
7	Lack of dialogue with parents on children's progress	107	22.0
8	Unsuitable teaching methods for learning	106	21.8
9	Congested classrooms	101	20.8
10	Unsupervised instructional facilities	92	18.9
11	Members' lack of opportunities to express their opinion	85	17.5
12	Poor principal-teacher communication	84	17.3
12	Physically unfit and lowly motivated teachers	84	17.3
13	Teachers' lack of training on discipline	57	11.7
13	Lack of programs to promote members' health	57	11.7
14	Lack of initiative to monitor and improve students' learning	56	11.5
14	Unstructured learning environment	56	11.5
14	Poor assistance on the members' problems	56	11.5
15	Irregular assessment of grounds for health and safety	55	11.3
16	Teachers' lack of training on diverse instruction	49	10.1
17	Lack of opportunities to celebrate the members' accomplishments	47	9.7
18	Toleration of physical punishment and foul languages	40	8.2
19	Professional jealousy	38	7.8
20	Unsafe ground during the school day	36	7.4
21	Students' lack of cooperative learning opportunities	33	6.8
22	Lack of members' protection from abuses	29	6.0
23	Teachers' lack of mentoring and professional development	27	5.6
24	Poor school participation of parents and community	25	5.1

### 3.7 Challenges on Teacher Leadership

With the overall great extent of teacher leadership, it is expected to have few challenges. But there were many issues and on top of these are the teachers' instruction and professional learning. The assessment of students of their teachers influenced the divergence. Harris and Jones [30] perceived that no matter how the teachers believe they are performing, their students can genuinely tell their performance given their usual contact. Hence, this signifies that the Catholic schools should consider the students' perceptions of their teachers in assessments and evaluations [1].

Meanwhile, Table 8 presents the teacher leadership challenges. The top challenges are teacher evaluation, professional development support, communicative relationship, and teacher involvement and recognition. The minor difficulties are collaboration with families and communities, conflict management, shared educational objectives, and diverse instructional needs.

Regarding the teacher evaluation, this is attributed to the lack of regular teacher monitoring and supervision due to the principals' complex duties, as supported by Maney et al. [24]. Thus, this implies that Catholic schools should regularly check their teachers to ensure their quality performance of the profession [12]. Relative to the schools' lack of resources to support the teachers' professional development issue, the Catholic schools' insufficient budget considering the annual decline of enrolment has to do with the problem as supported by Bual and

Madrigal [22]. Hence, these schools should improve their revenue generation to ensure the necessary support for teacher development [27].

Regarding communicative relationships, the teachers' overloaded work amid pandemic, has affected this problem which detained them from associating with colleagues [28]. Thus, this implies that Catholic schools should provide teacher activities that promote their continuous association with other members [5]. Relative to teacher involvement and recognition issues, the hierarchical structure of Catholic schools where administrators make decisions influence the assessment [10]. It is also affected by their lack of a sustainable reward system [23]. Thus, these schools should recognize their teachers' involvement and efforts to ensure their participation in the operation [35].

Regarding the least issues, the high level of connection among Catholic school members, including the strong linkages with parents and community in Bual and Madrigal [22], impact the fair assessments on the teachers' relationship with families and community and the conflict management. Relative to shared understanding, this is ascribed to the high assessment in Banusing and Bual [23] on the members' common understanding of the schools' identity and mission. In terms of the diverse instructional needs, the continued support of the families and the community amid the pandemic has to do with the slightest issue [28]. Hence, these imply that Catholic schools should sustain these strengths to ensure the teachers' competence and leadership practice [10].

**Table 8. Challenges on teacher leadership**

Challenges	f	%
1 Irregular teacher evaluation	143	29.4
2 Inadequate support for teachers' professional needs	138	28.4
3 Teachers' poor communication with school members	126	25.9
4 Teachers' irregular involvement in decision-making	122	25.1
5 Poor recognition of teachers' efforts	112	23.0
6 Lack of research opportunities for teachers	101	20.8
7 Poor utilization of the students' assessment	99	20.4
8 Teachers' poor relationship with families and communities	82	16.9
9 Lack of teacher training on conflict management	80	16.5
10 Lack of promotion for teachers' professional development	69	14.2
11 Teachers' poor understanding of the educational objectives	64	13.2
12 Teachers' lack of diverse instructional resources	60	12.3

The school climate and teacher leadership correlation validate the integrity of distributed leadership theory. The Catholic school environment is a significant factor in mobilizing the teachers to lead, perform, and participate [16]. With this, it affirms that a healthy environment elicits a successful sharing of leadership responsibilities among teachers. Hence, this signifies that Antique Catholic schools should provide their teachers with a favorable climate and necessary resources to motivate them to perform and lead [17].

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The Antique Catholic schools continuously provide a healthy environment by addressing the findings and the challenges. Moreover, establishing this environment and the Catholic school services is necessary to ensure the satisfaction and retention of teachers and students. Furthermore, the relationship within the institutions, along with their strong linkages with the community, is essential in nourishing the schools' atmosphere and operational vitality. Likewise, the maintenance of the facilities is vital in ensuring a safe and healthy environment for the members. However, strengthening their revenue is necessary to suffice these needs.

Meanwhile, the teachers participate, perform, and lead when there is a participatory and supportive environment where leadership is shared, opportunities are provided, and efforts are recognized. Also, teacher leadership is successfully sustained among Catholic schools when these teachers are competent and professionally developed. Hence, continuing teacher education is necessary to boost their leadership participation.

#### CONSENT

As per international standard or university standard, respondents' written consent has been collected and preserved by the authors.

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#### COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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