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## | RESEARCH ARTICLE

# Inside the School Ecosystem: Examining the Relationship Between School Culture and Teachers' Job Satisfaction Through Stoll and Fink's Framework

**Dr. Christian R. Duran<sup>1</sup>✉ and Dr. Porferio J. Barlas Jr.<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> Program Chair, MBA, Siquijor State College

<sup>2</sup> Dean, College of PESCAR, West Visayas State University

**Corresponding Author:** Dr. Christian R. Duran, **E-mail:** [christianrduran@gmail.com](mailto:christianrduran@gmail.com)

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## | ABSTRACT

This research investigated how school culture influences teachers' job satisfaction across 19 secondary schools within the DepEd Schools Division of Siquijor. Anchored in Stoll and Fink's School Culture Framework and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, the study explored the impact of various school culture types namely Moving, Cruising, Strolling, Struggling, and Sinking on teachers' levels of job satisfaction. The findings underscore the critical role of school culture in shaping key organizational outcomes within the educational setting. The primary goal of this study was to assess the extent to which different cultural environments affect teachers' overall job satisfaction. A descriptive correlational design was utilized, drawing data from teachers through a school culture assessment tool and a modified job satisfaction survey. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data. Results show that Moving Culture stood out with a strong positive correlation to teachers' job satisfaction. In contrast, Cruising Culture, Strolling Culture, and Struggling Culture all showed non-significant negative correlations. Finally, Sinking Culture shows the strongest negative correlation with teachers' job satisfaction. These findings highlight the importance of school culture in cultivating supportive and motivating work environments for teachers. The study recommends targeted interventions concerning culture enhancement strategies for schools exhibiting less desirable cultural characteristics to elevate teacher morale and institutional performance.

## | KEYWORDS

school culture, teachers' job satisfaction, DepEd

## | ARTICLE INFORMATION

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### 1.0 Introduction

#### 1.1. Background of the Study

School heads are central to the attainment of educational goals and the advancement of the school community, as they serve both instructional and managerial functions (Villar, 2021). In the Philippine context, Republic Act No. 9155 requires every public school to be headed by a school leader responsible for overseeing curriculum delivery, enhancing staff competencies, managing school resources, and ensuring a supportive learning atmosphere. Such an atmosphere is deeply shaped by school culture, which refers to the collective values, norms, beliefs, and practices that guide daily interactions and processes within the school.

Empirical evidence indicates that school culture largely influenced by leadership practices and collegial interactions plays a crucial role in shaping teachers' morale, professional dedication, and overall job satisfaction (Sumiran et al., 2022; Bush, 2024; Wu et al., 2020). Studies conducted in the Philippine setting reveal that a clan-oriented organizational culture characterized by

collaboration, shared values, and mutual support enhances teacher commitment and exerts a modest yet significant effect on job satisfaction (Batugal & Tindowen, 2019). Similarly, schools that cultivate supportive, innovative, and positive cultural environments tend to exhibit higher levels of teacher engagement and stronger retention rates (Bantilan et al., 2024; Aliazas & Chua, 2021).

The Schools Division of Siquijor under the Department of Education consists of 64 elementary schools and 19 secondary schools, classified as either National High Schools or Integrated Schools. These institutions vary in their administrative arrangements, as Integrated Schools are overseen by both a School Principal who oversees the whole school and a Head Teacher who primarily manages the secondary department. Although school heads significantly influence the overall school climate, there remains a limited presence of systematic feedback systems and empirical studies that directly examine the influence of school culture on teachers' job satisfaction.

In response to this research gap, the present study investigates the relationship between school culture and teachers' job satisfaction in secondary schools within the DepEd Schools Division of Siquijor. The results are expected to generate insights into strategies for strengthening school culture to foster a more supportive, motivating, and satisfying work environment for teachers, which may ultimately contribute to higher morale, improved retention, and better school performance.

### *Research Questions*

1. What is the prevailing school culture at DepEd Schools Division of Siquijor in terms of Moving, Cruising, Strolling, Struggling, and Sinking as assessed by the teachers?
2. What is the level of teachers' job satisfaction in terms of Technical Supervision, Peer Relationships, Working Conditions, Responsibility, and Advancement?
3. Are there significant relationships between school culture, and teachers' job satisfaction?

### 1.2. Theoretical Framework

The study is anchored on Schein's Organizational Culture Theory (as applied in Kwan & Wong, 2015), which explains that organizational behavior is shaped by three interrelated levels: artifacts (observable practices and structures), espoused values (shared beliefs, goals, and mission), and basic underlying assumptions (deeply embedded norms and perceptions). In the school context, these cultural layers collectively influence leadership practices, interpersonal relationships, and the overall teaching-learning environment.

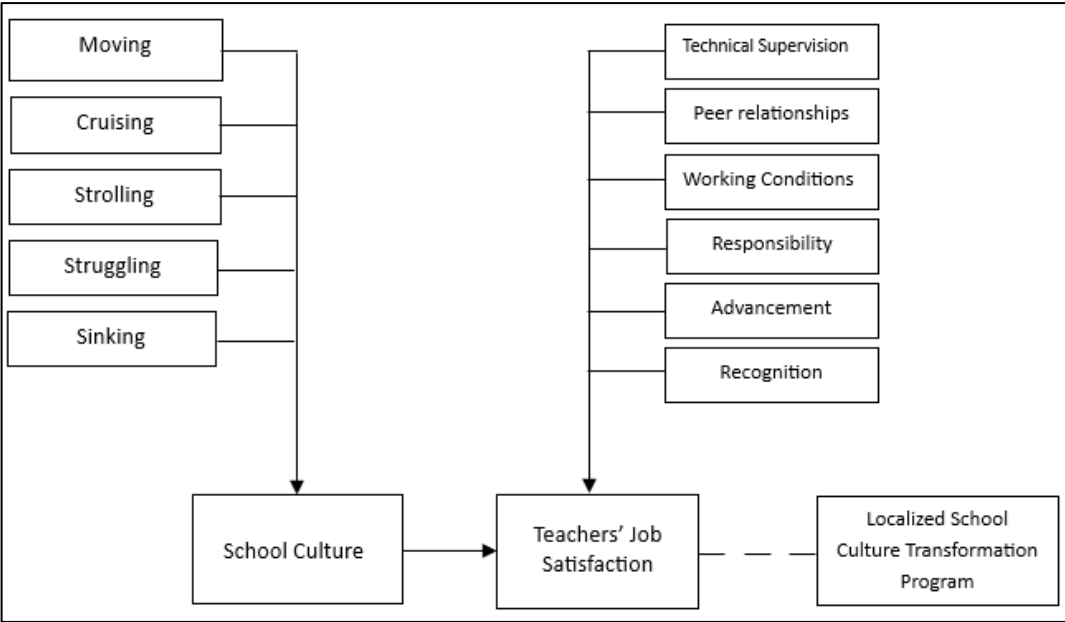
Using a modified instrument based on Gruenert and Valentine (1998) and the five school culture types identified by Stoll and Fink (1996, as cited by Özgenel et al., 2025), school culture is classified into Moving, Cruising, Strolling, Struggling, and Sinking cultures.

In addition, this study also utilized Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory which distinguishes between hygiene factors (e.g., supervision, working conditions, peer relationships) and motivators (e.g., recognition, responsibility, advancement). In the case of DepEd Siquijor, these factors were assessed to determine how school heads' leadership influences teacher job satisfaction, using an instrument adapted from Lester (1987).

Moreover, Blase and Greenfield's Interactive Theory (1980) was also utilized explaining how teacher motivation and satisfaction are influenced by perceived effectiveness. Teachers in DepEd Siquijor who see their efforts reflected in student success are more likely to feel satisfied and exert greater effort—highlighting the feedback loop between leadership, school environment, and teacher performance.

Lastly, Bronfenbrenner's Social Ecological Theory (1986, as cited by Fang & Qi, 2023) contextualizes teacher satisfaction as a product of ongoing interaction between internal traits (e.g., motivation) and external factors such as school climate and leadership behavior.

1.3. Conceptual Framework



The conceptual framework positions school culture as a key influencing factor of teachers' job satisfaction in secondary schools under the DepEd Division of Siquijor. School culture is classified into five categories. A Moving culture is characterized by shared vision, continuous improvement, strong collaboration, and high collective responsibility for student learning. A Cruising culture reflects past success and stability, where schools maintain acceptable performance levels but show limited innovation or urgency for improvement. A Strolling culture exhibits comfort and complacency, with low pressure for excellence and minimal collective drive toward school goals. A Struggling culture is marked by low morale, weak leadership support, internal conflicts, and inconsistent instructional practices. Finally, a Sinking culture represents severe organizational dysfunction, where declining performance, resistance to change, and lack of trust hinder both teaching effectiveness and school improvement.

Teachers' job satisfaction, the outcome variable of the framework, is examined through selected dimensions derived from Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, focusing on both motivational and contextual aspects of work. Technical supervision refers to the quality of instructional guidance, feedback, and professional support provided by school leaders. Peer relationships encompass collegiality, collaboration, and interpersonal support among teachers. Working conditions include the physical environment, availability of instructional resources, workload, and overall school climate. Responsibility reflects the degree of autonomy, trust, and involvement teachers experience in decision-making and instructional tasks. Advancement pertains to opportunities for professional growth, promotion, and career development, while recognition involves acknowledgment and appreciation of teachers' efforts and achievements by school leaders and stakeholders.

Overall, the integrated framework enables the study to examine how varying school culture types influence specific dimensions of teachers' job satisfaction. By linking organizational culture to teachers' work-related experiences, the framework provides a systematic basis for understanding how cultural conditions within schools contribute to teacher motivation, commitment, and satisfaction in a localized educational context where regular culture assessment mechanisms remain limited.

1.4. Related Literature

1.4.1. School Culture

Recent studies have examined the dynamics of school culture and its impact on school effectiveness. For instance, a study by Pabalan and Pabalan (2020) explored the relationship between school culture and effectiveness in junior high schools in the Philippines. Their findings suggest that schools with a strong, positive culture tend to be more effective, aligning with Stoll and Fink's (1996) notion that schools are either improving or declining. They identified that schools exhibiting a 'Moving' culture, characterized by shared goals, collaboration, and continuous improvement, demonstrated higher levels of effectiveness. Schools with Moving school culture are effective schools. The people in these schools actively work together to respond to their

changing context, and to keep developing. They know where they are going and possess the will, structure, and skill to get there.

Similarly, a study by Koundyannan et al. (2020) examined the predictors of school effectiveness in Malaysian schools. Their research highlighted that a positive school culture and climate are significant predictors of school effectiveness, supporting the idea that schools with a "Cruising" culture marked by stability and consistent performance are more likely to maintain effectiveness over time. Cruising school culture is characterized by complacency, often with privileged learners who achieve despite little school dynamism are generally perceived as effective by teachers, administrators, and the surrounding community. They are usually located in higher Socio-Economic Status (SES) areas here pupils achieve despite the quality of teaching. Students score well on standardized measures when compared with the population at large, though not necessarily well against other students of similar economic backgrounds.

In contrast, schools categorized as 'Strolling' or 'Struggling' cultures, which may exhibit complacency or resistance to change, often face challenges in maintaining or improving effectiveness. These findings underscore the importance of fostering a proactive and adaptive school culture to ensure continuous improvement and effectiveness. Schools with Strolling school culture are neither particularly effective nor ineffective. Efforts are made towards improvements, but at an inadequate pace. They have ill-defined and sometimes conflicting aims. These are average schools that seem to be meandering into the future. Strolling schools often require stimulation from an outside source. Schools with Struggling school culture are ineffective and they know it, they have the will to improve, but lack the direction or the skill. They will try anything (and often already have). These schools benefit the most from outside consultants.

On the other hand, findings from a study by Ye (2023) exploring the role of district-led school network governance in transforming turnaround schools in rural Shanghai, China indicated that schools with a 'Sinking' culture characterized by apathy, lack of effort toward change, and undemanding curricula were challenging to reform. The study suggested that such schools might require structural changes, including leadership shifts and curriculum reforms, to initiate improvement.

#### 1.4.2. Teachers' Job Satisfaction

Recent empirical research consistently demonstrates that technical supervision and administrative support are critical determinants of teachers' job satisfaction, as they provide instructional guidance, constructive feedback, and professional mentoring that enhance teachers' sense of competence and support (Sebullen & Jimenez, 2024; Dacer et al., 2025). Effective supervision fosters clarity of expectations, continuous professional growth, and trust between school leaders and teachers. Alongside leadership support, peer relationships and teacher collaboration significantly contribute to job satisfaction by promoting collegiality, shared problem-solving, and collective efficacy. Studies indicate that meaningful collaboration, characterized by mutual support, professional dialogue, and shared instructional practices strengthens teachers' motivation and commitment to their work (Ma, 2025; Leley et al., 2025).

In addition, working conditions, including both physical resources and the psychosocial work environment, remain foundational to teachers' overall well-being and satisfaction. Favorable conditions such as adequate facilities, manageable workloads, and a positive school climate reduce stress and support sustained engagement in teaching (Cefai, 2025). Beyond these contextual factors, motivational elements such as responsibility, career advancement, and recognition continue to emerge as strong predictors of job satisfaction across educational settings. Greater autonomy and responsibility enhance teachers' sense of ownership and professional identity, while opportunities for advancement and recognition affirm their contributions and promote long-term commitment to the profession (Tria, 2023; Zebon, 2025).

#### 1.4.3. School Culture as Predictor of Teachers' Job Satisfaction

Various studies affirm that school culture and school climate are significant predictors of teachers' job satisfaction across varied educational contexts. Empirical evidence indicates that schools characterized by supportive, collaborative, and professionally oriented cultures tend to foster higher levels of teacher satisfaction. Specifically, cultural attributes such as shared values, collegial relationships, and leadership support create an environment where teachers feel valued and professionally fulfilled (Sahin et al., 2023; Mahinay, 2024). Large-scale and cross-national analyses further reinforce these findings, demonstrating that positive school climate marked by trust, respect, and collaboration has a direct and meaningful impact on teachers' job satisfaction regardless of national or institutional context (Soe & Alegado, 2024).

Moreover, recent literature emphasizes that school culture operates not only as a contextual backdrop but as an active mechanism shaping teachers' professional experiences and attitudes toward their work. Studies reveal that organizational

norms promoting collaboration, professional learning, and shared leadership significantly enhance teachers' sense of belonging, motivation, and satisfaction (Huda & Alderite, 2024). Conversely, less supportive, or fragmented school cultures are associated with lower job satisfaction and diminished professional engagement. Research conducted in both public and private school settings further confirms that organizational culture particularly its human-centered and work-oriented dimensions plays a crucial role in sustaining teachers' job satisfaction and commitment (Balci & Erkasap, 2025; Jintalan & Velasco, 2024). Collectively, these findings underscore the importance of cultivating positive school cultures as a strategic approach to enhancing teachers' job satisfaction and promoting sustainable school improvement.

## **2.0 Methodology**

### **2.1. Research Design**

This study employed a descriptive–correlational research design to examine the extent of the relationship between school culture and teachers' job satisfaction. Correlation coefficients were computed to assess the degree and direction of association between the variables under investigation.

### **2.2 Participants of the Study**

From a population of 380 secondary school teachers across 19 schools in the DepEd Schools Division of Siquijor during the 2023–2024 school year, a sample of 195 respondents was determined using Slovin's formula. This formula was applied as a practical approach for finite populations in cases where prior estimates of population variance were unavailable.

The sampling frame excluded part-time, substitute, newly appointed, and recently transferred teachers who had not yet been assigned to their current schools during the 2023–2024 school year. Of the 195 survey instruments distributed, 149 were retrieved and deemed usable, resulting in a response rate of 76%.

An *a priori* power analysis was conducted to assess the adequacy of the sample size for the study's primary analytic approach, an F test in multiple linear regression. Conventional criteria were applied ( $\alpha = .05$ ; power = .80), along with Cohen's (1988) benchmarks for effect size (small  $f^2 = 0.02$ , medium  $f^2 = 0.15$ , large  $f^2 = 0.35$ ). Under these assumptions, the following example results apply:

Medium effect ( $f^2=0.15$ ): required  $n=97$  for 5 predictors;  $n=128$  for 10 predictors.

Small effect ( $f^2 =0.02$ ): required  $n=653$  for 5 predictors;  $n=833$  for 10 predictors.

Large effect ( $f^2=0.35$ ): required  $n=48$  for 5 predictors.

With an achieved sample size of 149, post hoc sensitivity analyses indicated minimum detectable effect sizes of approximately  $f^2 = 0.093$  for models with five predictors and  $f^2 = 0.126$  for models with ten predictors ( $\alpha = .05$ ; power = .80), values that are close to Cohen's convention for a medium effect. Accordingly, the planned sample size of 195, as well as the obtained sample, provided adequate statistical power to detect medium and larger effects in the multiple regression analyses conducted in this study but was insufficient for reliably detecting small effects.

### **2.3. Research Instrument**

#### **2.3.1. Adapted research questionnaire**

An adapted research questionnaire combining the School Culture Survey by Gruenert and Valentine (1998), and the Teacher Job Satisfaction Questionnaire' (TJSQ) developed by Lester (1987) was used and modified by the researcher to fit the current study and gather the needed data.

The questionnaire was divided into 3 parts. Part 1 gathered the socio-demographic data about the respondents. Part 2 gathered data on school culture and used the School Culture Survey instrument by Gruenert and Valentine (1998) adapted and

modified by the researcher to match the description of the five types of School Culture namely Moving, Cruising, Strolling, Struggling, and Sinking laid out by Stoll and Fink (1996) as cited by Stoll (2000).

The extent of school culture was assessed through a set of statements wherein respondents selected the option that best represented their perceptions. A five-point Likert scale was utilized to interpret the responses, with the following scale descriptions: a rating of 5, "Very Great Extent," indicates that a specific school culture indicator was consistently and thoroughly practiced or observed; a rating of 4, "Great Extent," signifies that the indicator was implemented or observed to a large degree or during most occasions; a rating of 3, "Moderate Extent," reflects that the indicator was applied at a fair or average level; a rating of 2, "Low Extent," denotes that the indicator was seldom practiced or observed; and a rating of 1, "Very Low Extent," indicates that the indicator was very rarely practiced or not practiced at all.

Part 3 focused on teachers' job satisfaction using the instrument developed by Lester (1987) adapted and modified by the researcher to fit the current study. Teachers' job satisfaction was determined using statements that required respondents to encircle the response that corresponds to their perceptions.

A five-point Likert scale was employed to interpret the respondents' ratings. The scale was defined as follows: a score of 5, labeled "Very Satisfied," indicates that a specific aspect of job satisfaction fully met the teacher's expectations and resulted in a high level of satisfaction; a score of 4, "Satisfied," signifies that the indicator met most of the teacher's expectations and generated a positive feeling; a score of 3, "Moderately Satisfied," reflects that the indicator met expectations to a reasonable degree, leaving the teacher generally content; a score of 2, "Dissatisfied," denotes that the indicator failed to meet most expectations, leading to feelings of dissatisfaction; and a score of 1, "Very Dissatisfied," indicates that the indicator did not meet the teacher's expectations at all and caused a high level of dissatisfaction.

### 2.3.2 Modifications to School Culture Survey (SCS) Instrument

The present study gathered data on school culture using the School Culture Survey (SCS) originally developed by Gruenert and Valentine (1998). The original SCS was designed to assess faculty perceptions of collaborative school culture and consists of 35 Likert-type items measuring six factors: collaborative leadership, teacher collaboration, professional development, unity of purpose, collegial support, and learning partnership. Respondents rate each statement on a 5-point scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree) to indicate their perception of school culture characteristics. The instrument was developed through literature review, large-sample pilot testing (632 teachers), and factor analysis to identify key elements of school culture and has been widely used in educational research to gauge the collaborative aspects of school environments.

While the conceptual foundation of the School Culture Survey was retained, the instrument in the present study was adapted and modified to align with the five types of school culture described by Stoll and Fink (1996) as cited by Stoll (2000) namely Moving, Cruising, Strolling, Struggling, and Sinking. These categories reflect a continuum of cultural health and effectiveness, with Moving representing the most desirable cultural state and Sinking the least. To ensure that the SCS items corresponded meaningfully to this typology, the researcher reviewed, reworded, and re-framed original survey items so they could be interpreted in terms of these five culture levels.

Modifications involved changes in item wording, response scaling descriptors, and the thematic framing of statements. Unlike the original instrument, which uses agreement (e.g., strongly disagree to strongly agree), the adapted version employed an extent-based response format designed to reflect how frequently or strongly a school embodies specific culture indicators.

Respondents were asked to encircle the description that best corresponds to their assessment of each item, using the following response categories: Very great extent which means that the culture indicator is practiced or observed thoroughly or all the time; Great

extent which means that the culture indicator is practiced or observed to a considerable degree or most of the time; Moderate extent which means that the culture indicator is fairly implemented; Low extent which means that the culture indicator is rarely practiced or observed; Very low extent which means that the culture indicator is seldom or never practiced.

The response options shift the focus from mere agreement with a statement to an evaluative judgment about the degree to which cultural traits are present in the respondents' school context. Each response category was assigned a numerical point value (5 for very great extent to 1 for very low extent) to facilitate quantitative analysis of school culture levels in relation to the five typological descriptions.

The rationale for this adaptation was threefold: (a) to make the instrument's language and responses more congruent with the conceptual framework of five culture types, enabling clearer interpretation of a school's culture on this continuum; (b) to enhance clarity and relevance for respondents, allowing them to evaluate how much a culture indicator is enacted rather than simply agreeing with a statement; and (c) to ensure that resulting scores could be interpreted against the descriptive features

of the five types of school culture defined by Stoll and Fink. These modifications maintain the instrument's core intent which is assessing perceptions of school culture while reframing item content and response options to produce data that more directly map onto the typology used in this study.

### 2.3.3 Modifications to the Teacher Job Satisfaction Questionnaire (TJSQ)

The present investigation utilized an adapted form of the Teacher Job Satisfaction Questionnaire (TJSQ) originally developed by Lester (1987). Although the core constructs and overall framework of the original instrument were maintained, several revisions were implemented to ensure contextual relevance to Philippine public secondary schools and to improve clarity for teacher respondents. These revisions included modifications to item wording, contextual emphasis, response scaling, and overall organization. A key aspect of the adaptation involved situating each item within the lived realities of public-school teachers in the Philippine setting. Whereas the original TJSQ employed broadly worded statements applicable across various educational environments, the revised version explicitly referenced the school head, colleagues, and working conditions commonly experienced by teachers in local schools.

For instance, within the Technical Supervision domain, the item "My school head gives me guidance whenever I need help" explicitly identifies the school head as the source of instructional support, thereby personalizing the supervisory role. Similarly, the statement "My school head possesses relevant expertise and experience" preserves the original intent while clearly anchoring leadership competence to the principal's responsibilities. The item "My school head provides assistance for classroom teaching improvement" further contextualizes professional support by emphasizing instructional enhancement at the classroom level. These refinements help ensure that respondents interpret each item in a manner consistent with the Philippine secondary education system. Comparable linguistic and contextual adjustments were made across other domains. In the Peer Relationships subscale, for example, the statement "I like the people whom I work with" retains the original meaning while adopting simpler, more conversational language. Within the Working Conditions domain, items such as "The school's facilities are kept clean and up to date" were phrased using terminology reflective of local school infrastructure and maintenance practices.

In the Responsibility domain, the item "I feel satisfied with the level of ownership I have with my work" continues to capture the concept of professional autonomy while employing language commonly used by Filipino educators. The Advancement domain incorporated culturally appropriate expressions of career progression, including statements such as "I am encouraged to take initiative in determining my own career development" and "There are opportunities for me to cross-train and learn new skills," which align with professional growth opportunities within the Department of Education system. Similarly, items in the Recognition domain, such as "The school recognizes individuals for their major accomplishments on the job," retained the construct of acknowledgment while reflecting school-based practices of commendation and appreciation.

The response format was likewise modified. Unlike the original TJSQ, which utilized an agreement-based Likert scale (e.g., strongly disagree to strongly agree), the adapted version employed a five-point extent scale ranging from 1 (Very Low Extent) to 5 (Very Great Extent). This modification reframed responses to focus on the degree to which teachers experience satisfaction across various dimensions, a format deemed more intuitive for evaluating workplace experiences.

From a theoretical perspective, this change shifts the underlying response process. Agreement scales prompt respondents to assess their level of concurrence with a given statement, engaging evaluative alignment with the item content. In contrast, extent-based scales encourage respondents to judge the intensity or degree to which an experience characterizes their professional life. This distinction is noteworthy, as agreement formats may be more susceptible to response tendencies such as acquiescence bias, whereas extent-based formats direct attention toward concrete perceptions of lived experience (Krosnick & Presser, 2010).

Psychologically, the extent-based scale aligns more closely with how teachers typically conceptualize job satisfaction in practice. Rather than framing their experiences in terms of agreement or disagreement, teachers are more likely to assess how strongly they feel supported, recognized, or fulfilled in their roles. Consequently, this scaling approach may enhance respondent understanding and ecological validity. However, extent-based ratings may also compress response variability by limiting the use of neutral positions, potentially influencing the distribution of responses. As such, while the adaptation improves cultural relevance and cognitive accessibility, it necessitates empirical verification to ensure that the revised instrument continues to distinguish effectively among dimensions of job satisfaction and does not artificially increase inter-item correlations.

The adapted questionnaire retained the original thematic subscales which include Technical Supervision, Peer Relationships, Working Conditions, Responsibility, Advancement, and Recognition but presented them with clearer wording and more direct prompts to facilitate comprehension.

The modifications were guided by three primary objectives: (a) to strengthen cultural and contextual alignment with the realities of Philippine public secondary schools; (b) to improve clarity and engagement through simplified yet conceptually faithful language; and (c) to enhance administrative practicality during data collection. While these revisions are expected to preserve the content validity of the original TJSQ, the changes in response format and item phrasing warrant caution when comparing findings with studies that employed the unmodified instrument. To address these concerns, reliability and validity analyses were conducted in the present study to confirm that the adapted version demonstrated acceptable internal consistency and construct validity.

### 2.3.4 Mapping of Questionnaire Items to School Culture Subscales

To improve transparency and facilitate verification, a detailed mapping is provided showing how each item from the adapted questionnaire aligns with the corresponding school culture subscales.

<i>School Culture Subscale</i>	<i>Item Numbers (from adapted questionnaire)</i>
<i>Moving</i>	1, 4, 5, 7, 21
<i>Cruising</i>	9, 10, 19, 20, 23
<i>Strolling</i>	8, 11, 12, 13, 15
<i>Struggling</i>	3, 14, 17, 22, 25
<i>Sinking</i>	2, 6, 16, 18, 24

The mapping table includes only the school culture subscales. The job satisfaction portion of the questionnaire is already explicitly organized by subscale and sequenced accordingly, which makes a separate mapping table redundant. Each item is categorized and labeled under its respective intrinsic (motivator) or extrinsic (hygiene) factor, ensuring clear identification and straightforward traceability without the need for an additional table.

### 2.3.5 Validation of the Research Instrument

To establish the appropriateness and precision of the research instrument, the questionnaire underwent evaluation by three subject-matter experts with relevant professional backgrounds. The panel consisted of the President of Siquijor State College, an experienced practitioner in management, who examined the alignment of the instrument with the study's contextual framework; the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Siquijor State College, a doctoral degree holder in Linguistics, who reviewed the language use, grammar, and clarity of the items; and the Dean of the Office of Student Affairs at West Visayas State University, a specialist in Psychology, who assessed the instrument's potential effects on respondents. This multi-disciplinary review ensured that the questionnaire was both contextually suitable and methodologically rigorous.

Feedback from the validators indicated that the questionnaire items were largely appropriate and sufficiently comprehensive, and therefore did not require substantial revision. Only minimal refinements were made, consisting mainly of grammatical corrections and minor rephrasing to enhance clarity. These adjustments strengthened the instrument's validity while preserving its original structure and measurement objectives.

### 2.3.6 Reliability Analysis of the Research Instrument

The internal consistency reliability for school culture measures was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha. Each school culture category is composed of five items. Across all constructs, reliability levels met or exceeded the generally accepted threshold of  $\alpha \geq .70$ , except for the Struggling School Culture, which approached acceptability; Moving School Culture ( $\alpha = .759$ ), Cruising School Culture ( $\alpha = .719$ ), Strolling School Culture ( $\alpha = .736$ ), Sinking School Culture ( $\alpha = .775$ ), Struggling School Culture ( $\alpha = .682$ ),



The reliability interpretations follow established guidelines in which  $\alpha \geq .90$  is considered excellent, .80–.89 good, .70–.79 acceptable, .60–.69 questionable, and values above .95 potentially indicative of redundancy (George & Mallery, 2003; Zakariya, 2022). The relatively lower reliability of Struggling School Culture should be acknowledged as a limitation of this study, as it may weaken the robustness of inferences regarding transactional leadership in this context. This suggests that teachers' perceptions of Struggling School Culture may be less consistently measured compared to other leadership dimensions. Future research should therefore consider re-evaluating or refining this subscale through cultural adaptation, item rewording, or alternative operationalization to improve its reliability and ensure a more accurate assessment of Struggling School Culture.

An internal consistency analysis of the Job Satisfaction questionnaire indicated that all six subscales achieved good to excellent reliability. The Technical Supervision subscale produced an exceptionally high Cronbach's alpha of .993, suggesting almost perfect inter-item correlation. Although this reflects very strong internal consistency, values of this magnitude may indicate item redundancy rather than measurement of clearly differentiated constructs. Consequently, item-level analyses and an exploratory factor analysis were performed, revealing overlapping content among items. Based on these findings, redundant items were either removed or marked for revision to improve the scale's ability to assess distinct aspects of supervision more efficiently.

In the same way, the full 36-item Job Satisfaction scale yielded a Cronbach's alpha of .964, which, while excellent, may also be inflated due to overlapping items. Subsequent item and factor analysis informed refinements aimed at improving conceptual precision and minimizing redundancy. After refinement, the subscales continued to show strong reliability: Peer Relationships ( $\alpha = .915$ ), Advancement ( $\alpha = .909$ ), and Recognition ( $\alpha = .904$ ) demonstrated excellent reliability, whereas Working Conditions ( $\alpha = .868$ ) and Responsibility ( $\alpha = .879$ ) reflected good reliability. Overall, the revised instrument maintained high internal consistency while achieving greater conceptual clarity and measurement efficiency.

Several methodological issues merit consideration. First, both the adapted School Culture Survey (SCS) Instrument and the Teacher Job Satisfaction Questionnaire (TJSQ) were modified to suit the local context, including changing the response format from frequency-based to extent-based Likert scales. Although these changes were necessary for contextual appropriateness, they limit direct comparability with normative data from the original instruments unless statistical adjustments are applied. In addition, construct validity assessment was restricted to expert judgment and internal consistency estimates. More comprehensive validation procedures, such as Exploratory or Confirmatory Factor Analysis, would help confirm factor structures, identify redundant items, and provide stronger evidence that the adapted instruments accurately capture their intended constructs.

Second, overall scale scores were computed by averaging subscale means to give equal weight to each dimension. While this approach is acceptable, it may mask variability resulting from unequal numbers of items across subscales. For example, a shorter subscale with highly consistent items could disproportionately influence the overall mean. Future studies may benefit from using weighted scoring methods or factor-score estimation to achieve a more balanced representation of the underlying dimensions.

In conclusion, the adapted measures generally demonstrated acceptable to excellent reliability across domains. However, one construct, Struggling School Culture exhibited only questionable reliability, and certain subscales such as Technical Supervision and overall Job Satisfaction showed evidence of potential item redundancy. These limitations should be considered when interpreting the findings. Future research should incorporate factor analytic techniques to further refine the instruments, reduce redundancy, and strengthen their construct validity.

## 2.4 Data Gathering Procedure

After the research instrument was validated, the researcher formally requested permission from the Superintendent of the Department of Education (DepEd) Schools Division of Siquijor to conduct the study.

The questionnaire was then distributed across 19 secondary schools within the division. Before the distribution, the researcher coordinated with each school head and conducted an orientation for the participants. This session included an explanation of the study's purpose, an overview of the questionnaire, and a discussion on the type of data to be gathered. Written informed consent and waivers were obtained from all respondents, after which the data collected were analyzed and interpreted by the research.

## 2.5 Data Analysis Procedure

The data collected in this study were analyzed using the following statistical procedures:

*Mean.* The mean was calculated to identify the overall level of school culture and the degree of teachers' job satisfaction in secondary schools under the DepEd Division of Siquijor.

*Standard Deviation.* The standard deviation was computed to assess the extent of variation or consistency in teachers' responses regarding school culture and job satisfaction, providing insight into the distribution of the data.

*Pearson r Correlation.* The Pearson  $r$  correlation coefficient was employed to examine the relationship between school culture and teachers' job satisfaction in the secondary schools within the DepEd Division of Siquijor.

## 3.0 Results and Discussions

### 3.1 Results and Discussion on School Heads' Leadership Styles

#### 3.1.1 Results

Table I revealed that among the five dimensions of school culture, Moving Culture received the highest mean score ( $M = 4.08$ ,  $SD = 0.6507$ ), indicating that it is strongly evident in the schools surveyed. This type of culture is marked by a shared sense of purpose, high expectations, strong collaboration, and a continuous focus on instructional improvement (MacNeil et al., 2009; Fullan, 2020).

In contrast, the cultures of Cruising ( $M = 2.97$ ,  $SD = 0.8181$ ), Strolling ( $M = 2.92$ ,  $SD = 0.8908$ ), and Struggling ( $M = 2.87$ ,  $SD = 0.9118$ ) were all rated to a moderate extent. A cruising culture suggests that while routines and systems are in place, the drive for innovation or improvement is minimal and that schools may be "coasting" on past successes or comfortable practices. This echoes the findings of Iqbal et al. (2020), who note that cruising cultures often emerge in settings where leadership does not actively disrupt complacency.

Similarly, a Strolling culture, while not outright dysfunctional, reflects a lack of shared vision and weak instructional focus, where individual autonomy prevails over collective progress (Stoll & Fink, 1996; Sahlberg, 2021). Teachers in such environments may operate in silos, undermining coherence, and mutual accountability.

A Struggling culture, meanwhile, points to environments where dysfunction is emerging, where staff feel overwhelmed or unsupported, and student learning may begin to suffer. This type of culture is concerning and could be the result of ineffective leadership, resource constraints, or declining morale, as reported by Khan and Wahab (2023) in similar rural and resource-limited educational settings. The higher standard deviations for these three culture types (ranging from 0.8181 to 0.9118) indicate greater variability in perceptions across schools, suggesting that some schools may experience these cultures more strongly than others, possibly reflecting localized leadership or contextual differences.

Sinking Culture ( $M = 2.64$ ,  $SD = 0.9141$ ) also received a moderate extent rating, though it had the lowest mean score among the five categories. This type of culture is often marked by deep-seated issues such as persistent conflict, absence of instructional leadership, low expectations, and disengagement among staff. Although rated lower in presence than other types, its moderate extent is noteworthy and signals an urgent area for intervention.

#### 3.1.2 Discussion

As noted by Nguyen et al. (2020), "Schools with sinking cultures typically experience high turnover, minimal professional collaboration, and poor student outcomes." The standard deviation of 0.9141 is the highest among all five culture types, implying substantial inconsistency in respondent perceptions—this could mean that while most schools are faring relatively better, a few institutions may be experiencing serious cultural decline, skewing the distribution.

Overall, the cultural profile of schools in the DepEd Schools Division of Siquijor reveals a mixed but hopeful picture. The predominance of a Moving culture is promising and highlights the positive impact of effective leadership and shared professional values. However, the concurrent moderate presence of Cruising, Strolling, Struggling, and Sinking cultures indicates uneven progress in school improvement across the division. This variability may reflect disparities in leadership effectiveness, teacher support, stakeholder engagement, and resource distribution. As emphasized by Bush (2023), cultivating a

consistently positive and productive school culture requires sustained leadership development, systemic alignment, and targeted interventions for underperforming schools.

Crucially, building and sustaining a strong school culture is not the responsibility of school leaders alone; it requires the active participation of all stakeholders including teachers, students, parents, and community members who collectively shape the values, norms, and practices within the school (Hadley et al., 2024). When the broader school community is engaged and empowered, a more inclusive and resilient culture can emerge, fostering greater trust, collaboration, and shared accountability.

These findings support the view that school culture is a multidimensional construct that significantly influences both school performance and student achievement. Furthermore, the data suggests that strengthening transformational leadership may help elevate schools that are cruising or struggling by fostering a stronger sense of purpose, collaboration, and collective efficacy (Nguyen et al., 2021; Manzano-Sánchez et al., 2020).

Moving forward, educational leaders in the division may consider differentiated, community-driven strategies tailored to the cultural realities of each school to ensure that no institution remains stagnant or regresses into dysfunction.

Table 1. School Culture in the DepEd Schools Division of Siquijor in terms of Moving, Cruising, Strolling, Struggling, and Sinking

School Culture	M	Description	SD
Moving	4.08	Great Extent	0.6507
Cruising	2.97	Great Extent	0.8181
Strolling	2.92	Great Extent	0.8908
Struggling	2.88	Great Extent	0.9118
Sinking	2.64	Great Extent	0.9141

Scale: 1.00- 1.50- Very Low Extent; 1.51-2.50 – Low Extent; 2.51-3.50 – Moderate Extent; 3.51-4.50- Great Extent; 4.51-5.00 – Very Great Extent

The data in Table 2 showing Teachers' Job Satisfaction across various dimensions including Technical Supervision, Peer Relationships, Working Conditions, Responsibility, Advancement, Recognition, and Overall Job Satisfaction indicate that all aspects were rated within the "Great Extent" range (3.51–4.50). This suggests that teachers generally experience a high degree of satisfaction in their professional roles.

Among the dimensions, Responsibility received the highest average score (M = 4.32, SD = 0.6585), reflecting that teachers and staff feel empowered and trusted with tasks that offer autonomy and meaningful engagement. This aligns with Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, which highlights job enrichment and autonomy as key contributors to intrinsic motivation and satisfaction (Valaei & Rezaei, 2016). Supporting this, Ha (2025) stress that autonomy not only boosts teacher satisfaction but also helps mitigate burnout.

Peer Relationships followed closely (M = 4.23, SD = 0.7254), indicating a supportive and collegial work atmosphere. This is consistent with Duran & Barlas (2025), who reported that strong collegial relationships foster greater collaboration and boost educator morale.

Working Conditions also received positive feedback (M = 4.05, SD = 0.7726), suggesting overall contentment with factors such as workload, facilities, and scheduling. Tang et al. (2020) have noted that such environmental conditions play a significant role in teacher retention and effectiveness. However, the variation in responses implies that there may be inconsistencies in these conditions across different schools that warrant attention.

Technical Supervision was viewed favorably overall ( $M = 4.03$ ,  $SD = 0.8625$ ), though it exhibited the greatest variability among the job satisfaction indicators. This suggests differing experiences with supervisory support, highlighting a need for more consistent supervisory practices and professional development ideally incorporating transformational leadership principles that have been shown to enhance job satisfaction (Restiani et al., 2022).

Regarding Advancement ( $M = 4.00$ ,  $SD = 0.7675$ ), teachers reported moderately positive views on career progression and promotion opportunities. Nonetheless, some respondents indicated perceptions of unclear or unfair promotion processes, echoing findings by Alshammari & Alenezi (2023) that opaque advancement systems often contribute to dissatisfaction.

Recognition scored the lowest mean ( $M = 3.85$ ,  $SD = 0.7956$ ), revealing a perceived lack of adequate acknowledgment for teachers' efforts. This aligns with Wong and Laschinger's (2020) research linking insufficient recognition to burnout and reduced organizational commitment. These results suggest the importance of implementing consistent reward and feedback systems, such as public acknowledgment and merit-based incentives.

Overall, the composite job satisfaction rating ( $M = 4.08$ ,  $SD = 0.7637$ ) indicates a generally high level of satisfaction "to a great extent," though opportunities remain for further enhancement. This overall satisfaction level is comparable to findings from other Southeast Asian educational contexts, such as Malaysia (Subramaniam, 2022) which revealed that most teachers perceive themselves as generally satisfied with their job conditions and work environment.

Table 2 *Teachers' Job Satisfaction in DepEd Schools Division of Siquijor in terms of Technical Supervision, Peer Relationship, Working Conditions, Responsibility, Advancement, Recognition and Overall Job Satisfaction*

<i>Job Satisfaction</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>SD</i>
Technical Supervision	4.03	Satisfied	0.8625
Peer Relationships	4.23	Satisfied	0.7254
Working Conditions	4.05	Satisfied	0.7726
Responsibility	4.32	Satisfied	0.6585
Advancement	4.00	Satisfied	0.7675
Recognition	3.85	Satisfied	0.7956
Overall Job Satisfaction Average	4.08	Satisfied	0.7637

Scale: 1.00-1.50- Very Low Extent; 1.51-2.50 – Low Extent; 2.51-3.50 – Moderate Extent; 3.51-4.50 – Great Extent; 4.51-5.00 – Very Great Extent

### 3.2 Results and Discussion on Relationship Between School Culture and Job Satisfaction

#### 3.2.1 Results

To examine the degree and direction of relationships between job satisfaction and various types of school culture, Pearson  $r$  Correlation ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) was employed. Through this method, the study was able to identify specific cultural dimensions that bear meaningful connections with job satisfaction, shedding light on the behavioral and organizational factors that may contribute to or detract from employee morale and engagement.

Results in Table 3 revealed that Moving Culture stands out with a strong positive correlation to Job Satisfaction ( $r = .813$ ,  $p < .001$ ). This indicates that an energetic, purposeful, and forward-moving workplace culture contributes significantly to job satisfaction. Deal and Peterson (2016) highlight that such cultures, where values are shared and goals are collectively pursued, empower employees and foster a thriving work environment.

In contrast, Cruising Culture ( $r = -.095$ ,  $p = .699$ ), Strolling Culture ( $r = -.219$ ,  $p = .367$ ), and Struggling Culture ( $r = -.225$ ,  $p = .354$ ) all show non-significant negative correlations, suggesting that less engaged, complacent, or disorganized workplace environments may slightly undermine job satisfaction, but not to a statistically meaningful extent.

Finally, Sinking Culture shows the strongest negative correlation with Job Satisfaction ( $r = -.349$ ,  $p = .142$ ), though it too is not statistically significant. This implies that toxic, stagnant cultures characterized by dysfunction and low morale may diminish job satisfaction, though the data does not support this conclusively in this sample.

Table 3. *Correlation Analysis Between School Culture and Job Satisfaction*

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Correlation Coefficient (r)</i>	<i>Significance (p-value)</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
Moving Culture	.813	<.001	Strong Positive
Cruising Culture	-.095	.699	Very Weak Negative (NS)
Strolling Culture	-.219	.367	Weak Negative (NS)
Struggling Culture	-.225	.354	Weak Negative (NS)
Sinking Culture	-.349	.142	Moderate Negative (NS)

## **4.0 Conclusions**

The study's findings indicate that the dominant school culture in the surveyed secondary schools under DepEd Schools Division of Siquijor can be characterized as Moving, characterized by a collaborative, reflective, and growth-oriented environment. This implies that most schools operate under a shared vision, embrace change, and prioritize continuous development, an essential foundation for sustaining teacher morale and student success.

Teachers exhibit a high level of job satisfaction, particularly in terms of Peer Relationships and Technical Supervision. However, moderate satisfaction levels in Working Conditions, Responsibility, and Advancement highlight the need for strategic interventions to ensure that all aspects of the teaching experience contribute positively to teacher retention, effectiveness, and well-being.

The study affirmed that school culture and teacher job satisfaction are interrelated, with strong positive correlations among them. This supports theoretical models (e.g., Bass, Schein, Herzberg) which posit that a strong organizational culture contribute significantly to employee satisfaction and organizational performance.

Among the variables tested, Moving Culture emerged as the strongest predictor of job satisfaction. This indicates that a development-focused school culture has the greatest influence on teacher happiness and engagement.

## **5.0 Recommendations**

### **5.1 Localized School Culture Transformation Program**

The DepEd Schools Division of Siquijor, through the leadership of the Schools Division Superintendent and the Human Resource Development (HRD) Office, should design and implement a localized School Culture Transformation Program aimed at reshaping attitudes, behaviors, and relationships within the school community. This program should prioritize a whole-school approach that engages all stakeholders including students, teachers, staff, parents, and community partners in cultivating a Moving School Culture, one that is positive, inclusive, and forward-looking.

The program may include targeted workshops, awareness campaigns, team-building activities, and reflective practice sessions to promote shared values and collective responsibility. Additionally, clear benchmarks, timelines, and success indicators should be established to monitor progress and ensure sustainability.

### **5.2 Regular School Culture Audits**

A systematic and regular audit of school culture using the Moving, Cruising, Strolling, Struggling, and Sinking framework should be conducted. These audits will allow early identification of areas needing support and facilitate targeted interventions for

schools exhibiting less desirable cultural characteristics while recognizing and reinforcing positive practices in schools maintaining a Moving culture. The audit process should involve quantitative measures (surveys) and qualitative inputs (focus groups and interviews) to provide a comprehensive understanding of school dynamics and inform evidence-based action plans.

### 5.3 Institutionalize Collaborative Strategies

The strong peer relationship ratings offer an opportunity to institutionalize collaborative strategies such as team teaching, cross-departmental projects, and mentoring programs, further reinforcing a positive and supportive school culture. Teachers should be encouraged to participate in structured feedback mechanisms, professional learning communities (PLCs), collaborative problem-solving activities, and peer classroom observations to enhance collegiality and promote instructional innovation. The division may also consider establishing recognition systems for collaborative initiatives, such as awards for exemplary teamwork or innovation, to motivate participation and sustain a culture of collaboration.

### 5.4 Strengthen Recognition and Career Advancement

It is imperative to strengthen recognition mechanisms to ensure that teachers feel valued, appreciated, and professionally acknowledged. This can include formal awards, merit-based incentives, public appreciation events, and ongoing feedback. Simultaneously, transparency and fairness in promotion systems, professional development pathways, and career advancement opportunities should be reinforced to enhance perceptions of equity, motivate continuous improvement, and increase teacher retention. Aligning recognition and advancement with measurable performance indicators will further support a culture of accountability and growth.

### 5.5 Stakeholder Engagement

Other stakeholders, including students, parents, alumni, and local community partners, should leverage the study's findings to deepen their understanding of how school culture and teacher job satisfaction influence overall school effectiveness. Schools should create inclusive forums, workshops, and consultative sessions to engage these stakeholders in shaping school vision, policies, and programs. Their active participation can strengthen accountability, promote shared ownership of school goals, and foster a resilient and community-centered school culture.

## 6. 0 Declarations

### 6.1 Future Research

Although the preceding recommendations focus on policy, future studies are encouraged to adopt a longitudinal design to examine the long-term impact of leadership training on teacher satisfaction. In addition, employing qualitative methods such as interviews, case studies, or focus group discussions can provide rich, in-depth insights into the experiences of teachers and school leaders, which can inform more nuanced policy improvements.

### 6.2 Ethical Considerations

All participants provided informed consent before taking part in the study. They were fully informed about the purpose of the research, the procedures involved, any potential risks, and their right to discontinue participation at any time without penalty. Participants were given the opportunity to seek clarification and ask questions, and were assured that all information provided would remain confidential and be used exclusively for research purposes. Only individuals who voluntarily agreed and signed the consent form were included in the study.

### 6.3 Funding

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