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SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE AND WORK ENGAGEMENT OF TEACHERS IN CARMEN DISTRICT, DAVAO DEL NORTE

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the relationship between social-emotional competence and work engagement of teachers in Carmen District, Davao del Norte. Specifically, it assessed teachers' social-emotional competence across five domains: self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, relationship management, and responsible decision-making, crucial for effective teaching. It also determined their work engagement in terms of vigor, dedication, and absorption. It further aimed to examine the relationship between social-emotional competence and work engagement and identify which domains significantly predicted engagement. Quantitative, descriptive-correlational design was employed. The respondents were 115 public elementary school teachers, with sample size determined using Tabachnick and Fidell's (2019) formula, which recommends a minimum of 90 participants for studies involving five predictor variables. Data was collected using structured surveys and analyzed with weighted mean and standard deviation to determine levels, Pearson's correlation to examine relationships, and multiple regression. The findings showed that teachers demonstrated a high level of social-emotional competence across all domains. Work engagement was also high in vigor, dedication, and absorption. A significant positive relationship was found between overall social-emotional competence and work engagement, with responsible decision-making emerging as the only significant predictor. Based on these results, teachers were recommended to actively engage in professional development and reflective practices to sustain social-emotional skills and engagement. School heads were encouraged to foster supportive environments, provide social-emotional learning training, and recognize teachers' important contributions. Future researchers were advised to conduct longitudinal or experimental studies and extend the investigation to other educational settings to further explore the impact of social-emotional competence on teacher engagement.

KEYWORDS: *Carmen District; Davao del Norte; social-emotional competence; teachers; work engagement*

INTRODUCTION

Social-emotional competence and work engagement are essential factors that influence teachers' well-being and effectiveness. Teachers who are emotionally aware and resilient tend to be more motivated, committed, and capable of building positive relationships with learners and colleagues. These qualities help establish a positive learning environment, enhance the quality of instruction, and minimize the risk of burnout, thereby improving teachers' overall satisfaction and performance.

However, global evidence shows that many elementary teachers struggle to sustain both social-emotional competence and work engagement. In the United States, teachers continue to face growing emotional pressures and student behavior issues due to uneven implementation of social-emotional learning programs and insufficient professional preparation (RAND Corporation, 2023). In Finland, despite a strong educational system, teachers still experience stress, disengagement, and exhaustion, especially in elementary classrooms where individualized support is required (Drouin-Rousseau et al., 2024). In China, heavy workloads, administrative demands, and high societal expectations reduce teachers' engagement and strain their emotional capacity (Li et al., 2023).

Across different countries, systemic issues continue to influence teachers' competence and work engagement. Limited training in emotional regulation and inclusive practices, unfavorable organizational environments, and policy deficiencies related to workload management increase stress and reduce engagement among teachers (Nwoko et al., 2023; Angelini et al., 2024). Consequently, many teachers encounter weak collaboration, inadequate recognition, and challenges in maintaining engagement in their everyday teaching responsibilities.

In the Philippines, similar issues persist. Many elementary teachers lack formal preparation in social-emotional competence despite its importance in managing stress and building positive classroom relationships (Santiago, 2024; Lozano-Peña et

al., 2021). The high emotional demands of teaching, combined with diverse learner needs, often lead to emotional exhaustion, reduced motivation, and decreased work engagement.

Moreover, teacher engagement in the Philippines is further affected by unsupportive school environments and inconsistent leadership. Although teachers remain committed, excessive workloads, limited collaboration, and inadequate administrative support reduce their engagement and opportunities to build emotional resilience (Budiongan & Corpuz, 2024). Consequently, many teachers experience fatigue, disengagement, and challenges in maintaining positive classroom interactions (Iwal & Arenga, 2023).

In Carmen District, Davao del Norte, elementary teachers also face challenges that hinder both their social-emotional competence and work engagement. Weak organizational culture and limited support systems reduce opportunities for collaboration and emotional support, making it difficult for teachers to manage stress and sustain meaningful relationships. These conditions contribute to reduced motivation and professional commitment (Fernandez & Tagadiad, 2024).

Despite the increasing interest in these variables, localized studies within the Philippine setting remain limited. Existing research commonly explores social-emotional competence and work engagement as separate concepts, with minimal attention given to their relationship among elementary school teachers, especially in smaller districts such as Carmen.

Hence, this study was undertaken to determine the association of social-emotional competence and work engagement among elementary school teachers in Carmen District, Schools Division of Davao del Norte. Addressing these concerns is essential because deficiencies in these areas may contribute to burnout, lower instructional effectiveness, and unsatisfactory learning outcomes. The results of the study may serve as a basis for context-responsive interventions, professional development programs, and support mechanisms that enhance teachers' well-being and commitment to their profession.

THE STUDY'S OBJECTIVES

The primary objective of this study was to examine the relationship between teachers' social-emotional competence and their work engagement. Specifically, the study aims to:

1. Evaluate the level of teachers' social-emotional competence in terms of self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, relationship management, and responsible decision-making.
2. Identify the level of teachers' work engagement in relation to vigor, dedication, and absorption.
3. Establish whether a significant relationship exists between teachers' social-emotional competence and their work engagement.
4. Identify which specific domains of social-emotional competence serve as significant predictors or influences of teachers' work engagement.

METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines the methodological framework of the study, including research design, ethical considerations, respondents, research instruments, data gathering procedures, and data analysis. It describes how each component was systematically and ethically carried out. These procedures ensured a comprehensive examination of the relationship between teachers' social-emotional competence and work engagement.

Method Used

This study adopted quantitative research design, specifically the descriptive-correlational approach. This method was selected because it focuses on the systematic collection and analysis of numerical data to determine the levels of teachers' social-emotional competence and work engagement, as well as to explore the possible relationship between these variables. Through quantitative research, variables can be measured objectively and analyzed using statistical tools to identify patterns and connections. The descriptive component provided a clear picture of the variables as they naturally occur, while the correlational aspect enabled the researcher to examine the relationship between social-emotional competence and work engagement without manipulating any conditions (Kabir, 2019). Overall, this design was considered appropriate as it produced objective, measurable, and evidence-based results within the actual educational setting.

In this study, the descriptive-correlational design was used to determine the current levels of teachers' social-emotional competence and work engagement in Carmen District, Davao del Norte, and to assess whether a significant relationship exists between these variables. This approach combines description and correlation, allowing the researcher to both present existing conditions and examine possible associations. Social-emotional competence, treated as the independent variable, refers to teachers' ability to recognize, understand, and manage their emotions while maintaining effective relationships with others. It was examined through the dimensions of self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, relationship management, and responsible decision-making. Meanwhile, work engagement, considered the dependent variable, describes the extent of teachers' involvement in their work and was measured in terms of vigor, dedication, and absorption. Data was collected using structured survey questionnaires, which allowed responses to be quantified and analyzed in an organized manner.

The use of a descriptive-correlational design was suitable for this study because it enabled the researcher to describe the current status of the variables and examine their relationship without introducing any form of manipulation. This type of research is widely used to determine the nature, strength, and direction of relationships among variables as they naturally exist, without establishing cause-and-effect relationships (Creswell, 2014; Polit & Beck, 2017).Furthermore, this design enables researchers to observe real-life conditions and analyze associations between variables in their natural setting, making it suitable for educational research where manipulation may not be practical or ethical . Thus, this approach provided a clear, accurate, and reliable basis for understanding teachers' competencies and engagement, which may inform future interventions, programs, and policy development.

Sources of Data

The respondents of this study were one hundred fifteen (115) public elementary school teachers from the Carmen District, Davao del Norte. The sample size was determined using the formula of Tabachnick and Fidell (2019), which suggests a minimum of 90 participants for studies involving five dimensions of social-emotional competence. The actual sample size of 115 exceeded this requirement by 27.8%, indicating a more sufficient and reliable dataset for the study.

To be included in the study, respondents had to be officially assigned as public school teachers in the Carmen District and teaching at the elementary level within Key Stage 2 (Grades 4 to 6). They were required to have at least three (3) years of teaching experience to ensure adequate familiarity with classroom practices and professional demands. In addition, only teachers aged 30 to 50 years were considered, as this age range was assumed to reflect more stable professional experience and greater emotional maturity relevant to the study.

Teachers were selected as respondents because of their direct involvement in instructional delivery and their ability to provide relevant insights aligned with the objectives of the study. Their firsthand experience ensured that the data gathered were credible and reflective of actual classroom practices. In addition, the larger-than-required sample size enhanced the reliability of the study results.

Data Gathering Instrument

The main tool used to gather data in this study was a structured questionnaire aimed at assessing teachers' social-emotional competence and work engagement. It was composed of closed-ended items rated on a Likert scale, allowing the respondents to express their perceptions and experiences in a measurable way. The use of a structured format helped ensure uniformity in responses and made the data easier to analyze statistically.

The study used an adapted survey questionnaire sourced from existing instruments in the literature and online materials. The instrument consisted of two parts: the first measured social-emotional competence, while the second assessed work engagement. As the questionnaire was adapted, the researcher attempted to obtain permission from the original author; however, no response was received. Despite this, proper citation and acknowledgment of the source were maintained. The instrument was also subjected to validation and reliability testing to ensure its appropriateness for the present study.

The Social-Emotional Competence Questionnaire used in this study was adapted from Zhou and Ee (2012). It included 25 items grouped into five key dimensions, namely self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, relationship management, and responsible decision-making, with each dimension represented by five items. These dimensions provided a comprehensive basis for assessing teachers' social-emotional competence.

To ensure the content validity of the instrument, it was reviewed by three experts who evaluated its clarity, relevance, and alignment with the intended constructs. The results of the validation showed an overall mean rating of 4.09, interpreted as "Very Good," indicating that the questionnaire was appropriate for use in the study.

In terms of reliability, the instrument was pilot-tested among respondents with characteristics similar to the actual participants. Its internal consistency was measured using Cronbach's alpha, which resulted in a coefficient of 0.981. This high value suggests that the items were highly consistent and reliably measured the intended construct.

The scale below was used to interpret the level of social-emotional competence.

Mean Interval	Descriptive Level	Descriptive Interpretation
4.20 - 5.00	Very High	Social-emotional competence is always evident.
3.40 - 4.19	High	Social-emotional competence is oftentimes evident.
2.60 - 3.39	Moderate	Social-emotional competence is occasionally evident.
1.80 - 2.59	Low	Social-emotional competence is seldom evident.
1.00 – 1.79	Very Low	Social-emotional competence is never evident.

For measuring work engagement, the study utilized a questionnaire adapted from Deligero and Laguador (2014). The instrument contained 17 items, which were organized into three dimensions: vigor, covering Items 1–6; dedication, Items

7–11; and absorption, Items 12–17. These dimensions were used to comprehensively measure the level of work engagement among teachers. Since the instrument was adapted from an existing source, the researcher sought permission from the original authors to use the questionnaire. However, no response was received. Despite this, proper acknowledgment of the source was observed, and the instrument underwent validation and reliability testing to ensure its appropriateness for the present study.

Like the social-emotional competence instrument, the Work Engagement Questionnaire underwent both validity and reliability testing to ensure its suitability. For content validity, the instrument was subjected to expert validation by professionals in the fields of education and psychology. The experts evaluated the questionnaire in terms of clarity, relevance, and alignment with the construct being measured. The validation process resulted in an overall mean rating of 4.12, which was interpreted as "Very Good," indicating that the instrument was appropriate for use in the study.

To ensure reliability, the instrument was pilot tested among respondents with characteristics similar to the actual participants. Internal consistency was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, which produced a coefficient of 0.982. This value indicates excellent reliability, suggesting that the items consistently measured the construct of teacher work engagement. The scale below was used to interpret the level of work engagement.

Mean Interval	Descriptive Level	Descriptive Interpretation
4.20 - 5.00	Very High	Work engagement is always evident.
3.40 - 4.19	High	Work engagement is oftentimes evident.
2.60 - 3.39	Moderate	Work engagement is occasionally evident.
1.80 - 2.59	Low	Work engagement is seldom evident.
1.00 – 1.79	Very Low	Work engagement is never evident.

The instruments used in this study were carefully adapted to suit the objectives of the research and the context of the respondents. Feedback and recommendations from the adviser, panel members, and expert validators were taken into consideration and incorporated to improve the instruments. These revisions helped strengthen their construct validity and ensured that they were appropriate for the target population.

Sampling Technique

The respondents of this study were 115 public elementary school teachers from the Carmen District, Davao del Norte. The sample size was determined using the formula of Tabachnick and Fidell (2019), which recommends a minimum of 90 participants for studies involving five predictor variables, such as the dimensions of social-emotional competence. The actual sample size of 115 exceeded this requirement by 27.8%, thereby providing an adequate number of participants for statistical analysis and strengthening the reliability of the results.

Selecting a sample that met the recommended size ensured sufficient statistical power for the analyses, including Pearson's correlation and multiple regression, which improved the accuracy and stability of the results. The respondents represented the target population of elementary school teachers in the district, allowing the study to capture a realistic and comprehensive view of their social-emotional competence and work engagement. By using a statistically determined sample size rather than convenience or purposive selection, sampling bias was minimized and the reliability of the findings was strengthened. Overall, this approach increased confidence that the results reflected the characteristics of the broader teacher population and provided a solid basis for examining relationships among the variables.

Procedure of the Study

The data gathering process of this study followed a structured and ethically guided procedure to ensure the accuracy, reliability, and validity of the results. The procedure was conducted in Carmen District, Davao del Norte and was divided into several stages: Ethics Review, Validation of Instrument, Endorsement from the Dean, Permit to Conduct the Study, and Data Gathering.

Before the data collection began, the research proposal was submitted for ethics review on November 6, 2025, to ensure compliance with ethical standards for studies involving human participants. Key ethical principles such as voluntary participation, informed consent, confidentiality, and the right to withdraw at any time without any penalty were strictly followed. Respondents from Carmen District, Davao del Norte were assured that all their responses would remain confidential and would be used exclusively for academic purposes.

Before administering the actual survey, the instruments were subjected to expert validation on December 19, 2025, by professionals in education. The experts evaluated each item based on its clarity, relevance, and alignment with the constructs being measured. A pilot test was conducted among a separate group of special education teachers to assess the reliability of the instruments. Cronbach's alpha was used to determine internal consistency, which indicated excellent reliability of the instrument. These processes ensured that the tools were valid and reliable prior to the main data collection.

After securing ethical clearance and validating the instruments, an endorsement from the Dean of the Graduate School of Rizal Memorial Colleges, Dr. Nelia Aga, was obtained on November 15, 2025. The endorsement confirmed that the study met the academic and ethical standards required by the institution and authorized the researcher to proceed with the permit application for data collection in Carmen District, Davao del Norte.

Following the Dean's endorsement, formal approval to conduct the study was requested from the Schools Division Superintendent of Davao del Norte on December 23, 2025. Coordination with school principals and issuance of certificates of appearance were carried out with the school heads of the participating schools in Carmen District from January 13–15, 2026. Official letters outlining the purpose of the study, target respondents, and data collection procedures were submitted. Permission was secured before the commencement of any data collection activities.

Upon securing all necessary approvals, coordination with designated focal persons in each school in Carmen District, Davao del Norte was conducted to ensure smooth communication and proper scheduling of data collection. The actual data gathering was carried out on January 14–15, 2026. During this period, the validated questionnaires were distributed personally by the researcher or through identified coordinators to ensure efficient administration.

Prior to the distribution of the instruments, teacher-respondents were properly briefed on the objectives of the study and the ethical considerations involved. These included voluntary participation, confidentiality of responses, and the right of participants to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to their completion of the questionnaire. The questionnaires were administered in a paper-based format, and sufficient time was allotted for the respondents to complete them. After retrieval, all completed questionnaires were carefully checked, organized, and encoded for statistical analysis using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

For data analysis, descriptive statistics, including the weighted mean and standard deviation, were used to describe the levels of teachers' social-emotional competence and work engagement. To determine the relationship between the two variables, the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient was applied. In addition, Multiple Regression Analysis was conducted to identify which specific dimensions of social-emotional competence significantly predict teachers' work engagement.

Statistical Treatment

The following statistical tools were used for the comprehensive interpretation and analysis of the data:

Weighted Mean. To address the first two research subproblems, which focused on determining the level of social-emotional competence and work engagement of teachers, the weighted mean was employed. It was used to compute the average responses of the participants for each indicator, providing an overall measure of the variables under study. This enabled the researcher to interpret the levels of social-emotional competence and work engagement as very high, high, moderate, low, or very low.

Standard Deviation. On the other hand, the standard deviation was used to determine the extent of variability or dispersion of the participants' responses. It indicated how consistent or varied the participants' answers were in relation to the mean. A lower standard deviation indicated that the responses were more consistent, while a higher value indicated greater variability among the responses.

Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (r). To address the third research subproblem, which examined whether a significant relationship existed between social-emotional competence and work engagement, the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) was used. This statistical tool was appropriate for determining both the strength and direction of the linear relationship between the two continuous variables.

Multiple Regression Analysis. To address the fourth research subproblem, which aimed to identify which dimensions of social-emotional competence significantly influence work engagement, multiple regression analysis was used. This analysis enabled the assessment of the relative contribution of each dimension to overall work engagement, which provides insights into the factors that most strongly predicted teacher engagement.

Ethical Consideration

This study ensured that teacher-respondents were treated with respect, fairness, and care throughout the research process. Key ethical principles, including informed consent, confidentiality, risk minimization, and transparency, guided the conduct of the study to protect the rights and well-being of the participants.

Social Value. The study examined the relationship between teachers' social-emotional competence and work engagement in order to generate insights that may help strengthen teacher well-being, professional effectiveness, and overall school performance. The findings held value for educational stakeholders by offering evidence-based recommendations that supported teachers' emotional and professional needs, which in turn contributed to improved classroom practices and

student outcomes. Beyond the local setting, the results could inform educational strategies in other contexts where teacher engagement and emotional skills were critical.

Informed Consent. Informed consent was obtained prior to participation. Teacher- The respondents were fully informed about the study's purpose, objectives, and procedures. They were made aware that participation was voluntary, that no risks were associated with their involvement, and that they could withdraw from the study at any stage without any negative consequences. Clear, accessible language was used in all consent documents, and participants were given the opportunity to raise questions before signing the consent form.

Vulnerability of Respondents. Although teachers were not considered inherently vulnerable, the researcher acknowledged the possibility that reflecting on social-emotional competence and work engagement might have surfaced sensitive personal experiences. To address this, a supportive environment was maintained to ensure that teachers could share their perspectives without judgment or pressure. Respondents were allowed to skip questions or withdraw at any point if they experienced discomfort.

Privacy and Confidentiality. Protecting the privacy of teacher-respondents was a top priority. All responses were anonymized, and personal identifiers were excluded from the datasets and final reports. All research data were stored in secured password-protected files that could only be accessed by the researcher. In line with the Data Privacy Act of 2012, confidentiality protocols were strictly followed to safeguard all information throughout the research process.

Risk, Benefits, and Safety. The study posed minimal risk, as it relied on non-invasive methods such as survey questionnaires. However, discussing workplace engagement and emotional skills could have caused mild discomfort for some respondents. To mitigate this, teachers were free to decline any question. The benefits of the study outweighed the risks, as findings provided valuable insights that supported professional development, enhanced teacher well-being, and improved engagement within schools. Participants also had access to the results for their professional growth.

Justice. The principle of justice was upheld by providing all teachers who met the inclusion criteria with an equal opportunity to participate in the study. Selection was free from bias, and findings were shared fairly among all stakeholders, which ensured that no group was disproportionately excluded from the benefits of the research.

Transparency. Transparency was maintained at every stage. Before participation, all participants were provided with clear information regarding the study's purpose, procedures, possible risks, and expected benefits. Updates on progress were made available to relevant stakeholders, and upon completion, findings were shared with participants, schools, and education policymakers to encourage the application of results in practice.

Qualification of Researcher. The researcher possesses substantial professional experience, having rendered 15 years of service in the teaching profession. In addition, the researcher has actively participated in various seminars and trainings conducted by the Department of Education (DepEd), which contributed to her continuous professional development. The researcher has completed training related to the conduct of educational research and possesses sufficient knowledge of ethical standards, particularly in obtaining informed consent, maintaining confidentiality, and observing data protection procedures. These competencies contributed to the proper implementation of the study with integrity, professionalism, and compliance with ethical principles, while protecting the rights and welfare of the participants.

Conflict of Interest. The researcher declared that no conflict of interest existed in the conduct of the study. The study was conducted independently and was not influenced by financial or personal interests. Should any potential conflict have arisen, it would have been disclosed to participants and stakeholders.

Adequacy of Facilities. Data collection was conducted in a conducive and respectful environment, whether through quiet physical spaces or secure online platforms. Proper tools such as survey software and secure storage devices were provided to ensure accuracy, comfort, and confidentiality.

Community Involvement. The study engaged the educational community by aligning its objectives with the needs of teachers and school leaders. Feedback from stakeholders was considered in refining research instruments. After completion, findings were disseminated to teachers, administrators, and policymakers to encourage dialogue and inform strategies for improving teacher engagement and social-emotional competence.

Results

The findings revealed that teachers demonstrated a **high level of social-emotional competence** (M = 3.97, SD = 0.43). Among its dimensions, **self-management** obtained the highest mean (M = 4.18), followed by **social awareness** and **relationship management** (M = 3.92), **self-awareness** (M = 3.91), and **responsible decision-making** (M = 3.90). This

indicates that teachers generally possess strong emotional regulation, empathy, self-awareness, interpersonal skills, and reflective decision-making abilities.

Teachers' **work engagement** was also rated **high** (M = 3.96, SD = 0.37). Among the domains, **dedication** ranked highest (M = 4.15), followed by **absorption** (M = 3.99) and **vigor** (M = 3.73). These results suggest that teachers often show enthusiasm, pride, focus, energy, and commitment in performing their professional duties.

Correlation analysis showed a **significant positive relationship** between social-emotional competence and work engagement ($r = 0.609$, $p = 0.000$). This means that teachers with stronger social-emotional competence tend to demonstrate higher work engagement. Specifically, teachers who can regulate emotions, understand others, manage relationships, and make responsible decisions are more likely to remain dedicated, focused, and motivated at work.

Regression analysis further revealed that social-emotional competence significantly predicted work engagement ($R = 0.623$, $R^2 = 0.389$, $F = 13.855$, $p = 0.000$), explaining **38.9% of the variance** in teachers' work engagement. Among the domains, only **responsible decision-making** significantly influenced work engagement ($B = 0.151$, $p = 0.001$), while self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, and relationship management were not significant predictors when considered together.

Overall, the findings imply that strengthening teachers' responsible decision-making skills may enhance their work engagement. Teachers who carefully analyze situations, consider consequences, and make ethical professional decisions are more likely to sustain their energy, dedication, and involvement in teaching. Thus, professional development programs should include activities that build reflective judgment, ethical decision-making, emotional regulation, and social-emotional competence to promote stronger teacher engagement and instructional effectiveness.

Summary

The study aimed to examine the significance of the relationship between teachers' social-emotional competence and work engagement in Carmen District, Davao del Norte. A total of one hundred fifteen (115) public elementary school teachers teaching Key Stage 2 (Grades 4–6), aged 30 to 50, and with at least three years of teaching experience, participated in the study. A quantitative descriptive-correlational research design was used, and the data were analyzed using weighted mean, standard deviation, Pearson product-moment correlation, and multiple regression analysis at a 0.05 level of significance.

1. The findings of the study are summarized as follows: Teachers' social-emotional competence was high across all dimensions, with mean scores ranging from 3.90 to 4.18 and standard deviations ranging from 0.43 to 0.63, indicating relatively low variability in responses. The overall mean of 3.97 suggests that teachers frequently demonstrate strong emotional and interpersonal skills that support effective classroom interactions, positive teacher-student relationships, and sound professional decision-making.
2. The level of teachers' work engagement was high across all dimensions, with mean scores ranging from 3.73 to 4.15 and standard deviations ranging from 0.19 to 0.78, indicating generally consistent responses among teachers. The overall mean of 3.96 suggested that teachers frequently exhibited vigor, dedication, and absorption in their work. These results indicated that teachers were highly committed, motivated, and fully involved in their professional responsibilities, which contributed to effective teaching practices and positive classroom outcomes.
3. The analysis revealed significant positive relationships between teachers' social-emotional competence and work engagement. Overall social-emotional competence was strongly correlated with overall work engagement ($r = 0.60$, $p = 0.00$), suggesting that teachers with higher social-emotional competence tend to demonstrate greater work engagement. Among the dimensions, self-awareness was significantly related to dedication ($r = 0.74$, $p = 0.00$) and overall work engagement ($r = 0.58$, $p = 0.00$), while social awareness, self-management, and relationship management were also significantly correlated with one or more engagement dimensions. Responsible decision-making was significantly associated with absorption and overall engagement ($r = 0.39$–0.32, $p = 0.00$). These results suggested that teachers' social-emotional skills contributed to their energy, commitment, and involvement in professional responsibilities.
4. Multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine the influence of social-emotional competence on teachers' work engagement. The model was significant ($F = 13.855$, $p = 0.000$) and explained 38.9% of the variance in work engagement ($R^2 = 0.389$). Among the dimensions, responsible decision-making significantly predicted work engagement ($B = 0.151$, $\beta = 0.253$, $t = 3.287$, $p = 0.001$), while self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, and relationship management were not statistically significant. These results suggest that teachers' ability to make responsible and reflective decisions has the strongest influence on their energy, dedication, and absorption in professional tasks, highlighting the importance of decision-making skills in fostering teacher engagement.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions are presented:

1. Teachers consistently demonstrate a high level of social-emotional competence, reflected in their strong self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, relationship management, and responsible decision-making. These competencies collectively support their professional effectiveness and classroom interactions.

2. The teachers maintain a high level of work engagement across dedication, absorption, and vigor, which reflect their strong professional commitment and enthusiasm. This demonstrates that engagement is a deeply rooted aspect of their teaching practice, which enable them to sustain motivation and effectiveness in their roles.
3. There is a significant positive relationship between teachers' overall social-emotional competence and their work engagement, indicating that higher social-emotional skills are associated with stronger work engagement.
Moreover, each dimension of social-emotional competence showed meaningful associations with overall engagement, which highlights its vital role in sustaining teachers' motivation and commitment.
4. The social-emotional competence significantly influenced teachers' work engagement, with responsible decision-making emerging as the only predictor. Teachers' ability to make sound and ethical decisions plays a crucial role in enhancing their overall engagement in their professional responsibilities.

Recommendations

Considering the foregoing findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are offered:
Teachers may sustain their social-emotional competence by actively engaging in professional development programs that enhance self-awareness, self-management, and relationship management skills. They may also practice mindfulness and reflective strategies to maintain high levels of vigor, dedication, and absorption in their teaching responsibilities.

School heads may strengthen teacher engagement by creating a supportive and collaborative school environment. This may be done by providing regular training sessions on social-emotional learning, initiating mentoring and peer-support programs, and recognizing teachers' contributions to promote a culture of professional growth.

Future researchers may explore longitudinal or experimental approaches to gain deeper insights into how social-emotional competence influences teacher engagement over time. They may also expand the study to other educational settings to develop more comprehensive strategies that can guide educational policies and practices.

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