



Research Article

Volume-05|Issue05|2025

The Relationship between Holistic Leadership and Teachers' Work Engagement in Public Secondary Schools, Adama City Administration, Ethiopia

Berhanemeskel Nigussie Zewudie

MA in Educational Planning and Management, specializing in Human Resource and Organizational Development in Education, Department of Teachers' Education, College of Education and Behavioral Sciences, Aksum University, Ethiopia. ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0547-5761>

Article History

Received: 13.09.2025

Accepted: 16.10.2025

Published: 24.10.2025

Citation

Zewudie, B. N. (2025). The Relationship between Holistic Leadership and Teachers' Work Engagement in Public Secondary Schools, Adama City Administration, Ethiopia. *Indiana Journal of Economics and Business Management*, 5(5), 51-66.

Abstract: The main purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between Holistic Leadership and Teachers' Work Engagement in Public Secondary Schools, Adama City Administration, Ethiopia. The study used correlational survey research design. Out of the 724-target population, 258 (182 males and 76 females) teacher respondents were involved. To analyze the data, spearman correlation and regression were employed using SPSS version 22. As the findings indicated, the relationship between holistic leadership and teachers' work engagement correlation coefficients ranged from $r=.220$ to $r=.443$ with a P-value of 0.000. Based on this, the researcher concluded that despite the correlation being low and moderate, the P-values clearly demonstrate a significant positive correlation between holistic leadership and teachers' work engagement in schools. Similarly, the regression findings revealed that the effect of the predictor (holistic leadership) on teachers' work engagement and the P-value showed 0.000. From this, it is possible to conclude that its influence is considered highly significant. Based on these findings, it is recommended that school leaders make concerted efforts to create strong relationships with teachers. From a policy perspective, it is further recommended that the Ministry of Education prioritize the integration of holistic leadership principles into educational leadership policies and frameworks.

Keywords: Holistic leadership, Dimensions of Holistic leadership, Engagement, Teachers' Work Engagement, Schools

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INTRODUCTION

The engagement of teachers is vital for the success of schools, as engaged employees exhibit high energy levels, passion for their work, and immersion in their roles, causing time to pass quickly (Macey & Schneider, 2008; May *et al.*, 2004; Schaufeli & Bakker, in press, as cited in Bakker *et al.*, 2008). Sudibjo and Riantini (2023) emphasize that meaningful engagement is the strongest predictor of teachers' work engagement. Without strong engagement, even ambition may lead to failure. Historical examples of successful scientists, innovators, and pioneers show that their achievements stemmed not only from inherent ability but also from profound engagement with their work. Similarly, the researcher of this study believes that the relationship between teachers and school leaders is a key factor in teacher engagement.

While leadership has been extensively studied in various organizations, the relationship between leadership and employee engagement, particularly in educational settings, remains underexplored. To date, no research has specifically examined the relationship between holistic school leadership and teachers' work engagement. Kristiana *et al.* (2018) contend that

educational organizations rely heavily on teachers to drive progress, as teachers significantly influence student performance and educational outcomes. Therefore, leadership plays a crucial role in shaping the level of teachers' engagement. The success, sustainability, and competitive advantage of an organization depend on the actions of its leaders and the degree of employee engagement (Fleming, 2009). Engaged employees tend to be more satisfied, productive, and committed to their roles, thereby reducing turnover. Consequently, it is vital for school leaders to establish strong relationships with teachers to foster high levels of engagement. This underscores the importance of investigating leadership and engagement models to better understand the relationship between school leaders and teacher engagement.

Among various leadership theories, holistic leadership is a relatively new approach, with only a few scholars having conducted empirical studies in this area. Holistic leadership models differ in their components, yet they all emphasize an integrated approach that incorporates multiple dimensions. For example, Gill (2003) proposed a holistic leadership model for effective change, encompassing intellectual, emotional, spiritual, and behavioral dimensions. Similarly, Best (2011)

developed the Leader-Member Engagement model, incorporating transformational, servant, and contingency leadership theories. Quatro *et al.* (2007) presented an integral model of leadership development, including analytical, conceptual, emotional, and spiritual dimensions. While these models vary in their specific elements, they all argue that effective leadership must address multiple dimensions in a comprehensive manner. Among these models, I believe that Gill's (2003) model is the most appropriate for this study, as it includes all relevant dimensions for examining holistic leadership and its impact on teachers work engagement.

Although no research has specifically examined the relationship between holistic leadership and teachers' work engagement, existing literature provides relevant insights. For instance, Zahed-Babelan *et al.* (2019) explored the impact of instructional leadership on teachers' work engagement in northern Iran. Their study found that while instructional leadership did not have a direct effect on engagement, it did influence teachers' work engagement indirectly through secondary variables. In a similar vein, Sudibjo and Riantini (2023) identified that perceived organizational support, servant leadership, and meaningful work engagement positively affected teachers' work engagement in Jakarta, Indonesia.

Other studies have explored leadership styles and their relationship with teachers engagement. Parveen and Riffat-un-Nisa (2014) conducted research in Punjab, Pakistan, revealing that leadership styles at secondary schools were significantly correlated with teachers' engagement. Maundu *et al.* (2018) found that transformational leadership positively affected employee engagement in Kenyan public secondary schools.

In Ethiopia, although many studies have examined leadership within educational institutions, there is a notable gap in research concerning the relationship between school leadership and teachers' work engagement, particularly from the perspective of holistic leadership. Some studies have explored leadership styles in non-educational organizations, such as Zeberga (2017), who investigated leadership styles and employee engagement in Ethiopian Airlines, and Asheber Endale (2020), who examined the role of leadership styles on employee engagement at the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia. These studies identified positive correlations between transformational and transactional leadership styles and employee engagement, while laissez-faire leadership was negatively correlated with engagement. However, these studies did not address the educational sector or consider the holistic approach to leadership.

Besides the literature reviewed above, the Education Statistics Annual Abstract (ESAA) document for the academic year 2021/2022, published by the Ministry of Education of Ethiopia (MoE, 2022), revealed

that there has been a significant growth in the enrollment of secondary school students over the past two decades. Furthermore, there has been an average annual increase in enrollment of 9.7% in the last five years. However, according to the Ethiopian Ministry of Education (MoE, 2023) grade 12 national exam result announcement, as reported by Ethiopian Monitor Daily News and University World News African Education, out of a total of 896,520 students who took the national school leaving exam for the 2021-22 academic year, only 3.3% - a meager 29,909 students achieved a score above 50% in the exam result declared by the Ethiopian Educational Assessment and Examinations Services (EAES). From those who took the exam, 339,642 students sat for the exams in the natural science stream, but only 22,936 students, or 8.6%, passed. Similarly, out of the 556,878 social sciences students who took the exam, only 1.3%, or 6,973, students were able to achieve a score above 50%. "This shocking result" is a collective result of the difficulties faced by the government, school leaders, teachers, community, and students themselves, the minister said (<https://ethiopianmonitor.com/2023/01/27/grade-12-exam>). It can be concluded that due to the fact that the school principals and teachers have shared the aforementioned results of the students, it was appropriate and logical to examine the relationship between school leaders and teachers' engagement in their work.

Effective leadership is crucial for preventing disengagement and fostering positive performance in any organization, including schools. Studies suggest that empowering employees and involving them in their work is essential for promoting engagement (Nicholas & Erakovich, 2013). Leaders who provide clear guidance and foster strong relationships with their employees tend to enhance engagement (Lowe, 2012). Despite the recognized importance of teacher engagement, research continues to highlight the issue of widespread disengagement among employees, including teachers (Musenze & Mayende, 2020). Disengagement can have a detrimental impact on productivity and outcomes across sectors (Auiha, 2014), and global surveys reveal that a large proportion of the workforce remains disengaged (Hewitt, 2012; Oehler & Adair, 2019).

In the context of Adama city in Ethiopia, as the researcher know about the problem existing in the study area, unlike private secondary schools, although there are many strong and hard-working teachers, but a significant number of public secondary schools' teachers are repeatedly absent from their class and they do not use the sessions that are intended for learning and teaching properly. Beyond I have observed this problem, as I got information from school principals, they were angry with such teachers and even though they repeatedly reported to the city education office, but they could not improve. This challenge, alongside the insights from existing literature, motivated the researcher to investigate the

relationship between school leadership and teacher engagement.

In addition to the issues highlighted earlier, several gaps identified in previous studies have motivated the researcher to undertake this study. These gaps are both theoretical and methodological in nature.

Theoretically, prior research (e.g., Batista-Taran *et al.*, 2013; Oliver, 2012; Papalexandris & Galanaki, 2009; Saul *et al.*, 2015; Shuck & Herd, 2012; Sulamuthu & Yusof, 2018; Wiley, 2010; Zahed-Babelan *et al.*, 2019) has predominantly focused on the relationship between a single leadership style and employee work engagement, mainly in non-educational organizations. This approach is limited, as employees have diverse attitudes, experiences, abilities, and motivational factors. Relying on a single leadership style may not effectively engage all employees. Although some studies (e.g., Parveen & Riffat-un-Nisa, 2014; Maundu *et al.*, 2018) have explored school leadership and teacher engagement, they have typically examined it from a leadership style perspective. However, this does not account for the emotional, intellectual, spiritual, and behavioral dimensions essential for effective leadership in varying contexts.

Similarly, in the Ethiopian context, while some local studies (e.g., Alem Teshome, 2020; Asheber Endale, 2020; Zeberga, 2017) have explored leadership and employee engagement in non-educational organizations, they too have only focused on leadership styles, neglecting the holistic leadership approach. These studies also fail to address the broader, integral nature of leadership required in educational settings. Therefore, the researcher argues that a more comprehensive approach, such as holistic leadership, is necessary to understand and improve teacher work engagement.

Another gap identified by the researcher lies in the tools used by previous studies to measure teachers' work engagement. Many of these studies employed the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) developed by Schaufeli *et al.* (2003), which assesses vigor, dedication, and absorption. While this tool is suitable for business sector employees, it may not be the most appropriate for educational institutions like schools, colleges, or universities. To address this gap, the researcher conducted this study using the Engaged Teachers Scale (ETS) developed by Klassen *et al.* (2013), which is specifically designed for educational contexts. The ETS comprises four key components: cognitive engagement, emotional engagement, social engagement with students, and social engagement with colleagues.

This study, focusing on the relationship between holistic leadership and teachers' work engagement in Adama City Administration public secondary schools, aims to address the gaps identified in previous research. By examining this relationship, the

study hopes to provide new insights and contribute to the theoretical and methodological understanding of teachers' engagement in educational settings.

The study was guided by the following basic questions.

- Is there a statistically significant relationship between Holistic Leadership and Teachers Work Engagement at Adama City Administration Public Secondary Schools?
- To what extent is the effect of holistic leadership on teachers work engagement at Adama City Administration public Secondary Schools?

Objective of the study

The main objective of this study was to examine the relationship between holistic leadership and teachers' work engagement at Adama City Administration Public Secondary Schools. To this end the study was aimed to:

- Examine whether significant relationship has been found or not between holistic leadership and teachers' engagement.
- Assess whether negative or positive relationship has been found between holistic leadership and teachers' work engagement.
- Examine whether no relationship has been found between holistic leadership and teachers' work engagement.
- Examine the extent to which holistic leadership influences teachers work engagement.

Significance of the study

It is obvious that strongly engaged employees determine the success of an organization. In this case, in order to encourage employees to be engaged in their work, leadership plays a crucial role. Therefore, since educational sectors such as schools have their own unique characteristics that set them apart from other organizations, this research helps to: determine if there is a significant correlation between holistic leadership and teachers' work engagement; to show whether holistic leadership is a determining factor in teachers' work engagement; highlight the importance of leaders prioritizing the holistic aspect of leadership in order to effectively influence teachers' work engagement; and to remind the Ministry of Education (MoE), higher education institutions, and schools to prioritize the concern of holistic leadership. Additionally, this study can serve as a starting point for researchers and educators who are interested to further explore this issue.

RELATED LITERATURE REVIEW OF THE STUDY

The concept of holistic leadership

Before we talk directly about holistic leadership, it is better to explain what holism means.

Holism is thus defined as "the theory that the universe, and especially living nature, can be correctly seen in terms of interacting entities (such as living organisms) other than the number of elementary

particles" (Merriam-Webster's Dictionary 1999, as cited in ASTDLA, 2003). Thus, in order to become a holistic leader, one must not only understand and lead others from that position, but must also understand how their own interactive aspects form a whole. Holistic leadership is defined as: a) the ability to lead the mind, heart and soul; (b) use a methodology that includes a systematic approach to development to influence oneself as a leader, others as a follower and the environment; and c) ultimately, this process should reflect the path of change at the individual, group, and organization / community levels (ASTD-LA, 2003).

Tice (as cited in Best, 2011) attempted to define that, holistic leadership defined as a people-centered approach that is both process and outcome oriented. Broader definition has given by Orlov (2003) on her website describes holistic leadership as a methodology focusing on systemic development that impacts oneself as leader, others as followers and the environment all resulting in a journey that leads toward transformation at the individual, team and organizational, community level (Orlov 2003, cited in Best 2011). Taggart (2009) offers a holistic leadership model on his website that includes components such as organizational teaching, personal mastery, reflection, inquiry, stewardship, visionary and strategic action, results orientation, thought leadership, power sharing, collaboration and nurturing. In addition to the definition given by the scholars above, Gill (2003) stresses that an integral model of leadership for successful change needs to explain vision, values, strategy, empowerment, motivation and inspiration.

Holistic/ Integral Leadership Model

A model designed by Gill (2003) and emphasizes that effective leadership change reflects all of these dimensions of leadership: intellectual, emotional, spiritual, and behavioral. Gill explains every dimension of integrated, holistic leadership as follows.

Intellectual/cognitive dimension - Effective leadership requires intellectual or thought abilities to understand and comprehend information, think about it, design options, use intuition, make decisions, solve problems, and make decisions. These capacities create the vision, mission, shared values, and strategies to maintain the vision and mission that "gains" people's minds.

Emotional dimension - means to understand oneself and other people, to show self-control and self-confidence and to react appropriately to others. Emotionally intelligent leaders use personal power instead of positional power or authority. In addition to cognitive and mental intelligence, emotional intelligence is the key to identifying and promoting shared values that support vision, mission and strategy, and empower and motivate people. Emotionally intelligent leaders "win the hearts of men."

Spiritual Dimension - The spiritual dimension of leadership is related to the desire for meaning and a sense of value that motivates people to what they seek and do. Meaning and this sense of worth depend on the vision and shared values to which one is party.

Behavioral dimension- The necessary behavioral skills of leadership include both using and responding to emotion, for example through 'body language', they also include communicating in other ways through writing, speaking and listening.

Employee engagement

As Khodakarami *et al.* (2018) explained that the concept of employee engagement was initiated in the seminar works of Kahn (1990), Harter *et al.* (2002), Schaufeli *et al.* (2002), Saks (2006), Rich *et al.* (2010) and Shuck and Wollard (2010).

Kahn (1990) defines employee engagement as "the simultaneous employment and expression of one's self in work characteristics that support work with others, personal presence, and actively promote full performance." Harter *et al.* (2002) described employee engagement as "individual involvement and satisfaction as work motivation." Schaufeli *et al.* (2002) defined employee engagement as a "positive, satisfying, work-related state of mind characterized by energy, dedication, and absorption" as a work-related relationship. Also, engagement has been defined as a quality that "reflects the extent to which an individual is psychologically present in a particular organizational role" (Saks, 2006). Some scholars argue that "engagement is the current investment of cognitive, affective, and physical energy in performing a role" (Shuck and Wollard, 2010). They argued that employee engagement is "the state of an individual's mental, emotional, and behavioral issues focused on the desired organizational results." Along with these definitions, researchers have proposed various measures (for a complete list, see Shuck *et al.* 2016). Similarly, consulting firms such as Blessing White, Gallup, Hewitt, Sirota, Towers Perrin, Valtera, and Watson Wyatt Worldwide have developed their own job promise scales (Attridge, 2009)

Engaged teachers Scale (ETS)

The model was developed by Klassen *et al.* (2013). The four components of ETS include: cognitive involvement, emotional involvement, social involvement: students and social involvement: colleagues. Cognitive engagement (CE), it is demonstrated by the presence of passion, perseverance, and devotion to teaching. Emotional involvement (EE) is reflected in a positive emotional response during work. Teachers' social engagement with students (SES) shows a degree of warmth, dedication and determination to maintain a responsible relationship with colleagues (Klassen, *et al.* (2013).

Leadership and Employee engagement

Effective leaders create a working environment that fosters employee engagement, commitment, and satisfaction (Hamid & D'Silva, 2014; as cited in Grant, 2019). Leaders who encourage worker enthusiasm positively affect employee engagement and make employees feel engaged and productive (Hamid & D'Silva, 2014). Studies revealed that higher levels of employee engagement end in increased returns on assets, higher earnings per employee, better organizational performance, and better retention (Albdour and Altarawneh, 2014; Popli and Rizvi, 2016). Therefore, so as to employees effective enough in their work, leaders need to be effective and possess holistic quality of leadership.

Theoretical and conceptual framework of the study

Best (2011) developed the Holistic Leadership Model for the involvement and development of leaders. The integrative class, which includes transformational, servant and authentic leadership theories, builds behavioral, attribute, and random theories by extending the leader's influence beyond the tasks in the leadership process itself. The conceptualization of leadership as a relationship allows for an integral view of leaders, followers, and situations, thereby reducing bias . . . give leaders excessive weight (Popper, 2004; as cited in Best, 2011). It is transformational, authentic and servant. The holistic leadership: leader-member engagement and development developed by Best (2011) clearly shows that it proposes holistic leadership based on integral leadership theories, namely transformation, servant, and authentic.

In another dimension, Gill (2003) developed a leadership model, integrated (holistic) leadership for change. An integral leadership model for change is proposed that reflects the dimensions and requirements of intellectual, emotional, spiritual and behavioral. The

model includes vision, values, strategy, empowerment, and motivation and inspiration (Gill, 2003). Among the theories and models of holistic leadership explained above, for the purposes of this study, because of its wholeness, the integrated (holistic) leadership model developed by Gill (2003) found to be appropriate and served as a theoretical framework for this study.

After the theoretical framework of the study determined, to select the appropriate and contextual model for examining teachers work engagement, the three models of employee engagement were examined. They are: Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES), developed by Schaufeli *et al.* (2002) and included Vigor, Dedication, and Absorption; the second is the ISA Engagement Scale, which consists of three components of engagement: intellectual, social, and affective engagement (Soane *et al.*'s 2012) and Measuring Teacher Engagement: Developing a Range of Engaged Teachers (Klassen, *et al.* 2013). The four components of ETS include: Teachers' cognitive involvement, Teachers' emotional involvement, Teachers' social involvement: students and social involvement: peers. Among the three models of employee engagement scale described above, the "teacher engagement scale" was found to be appropriate and contextual for evaluating teachers' work engagement. Because the most widely used measure of employee engagement (Bakker *et al.* 2011) - the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) - is designed for employee research in business world industries and may not fit well into the context of educational institutions such as schools, colleges and universities.

An attempt made (see figure 1 below) to align the four dimensions of leadership in such a way they form a general conceptual framework that shows the relationship between holistic leadership and teachers' work engagement.

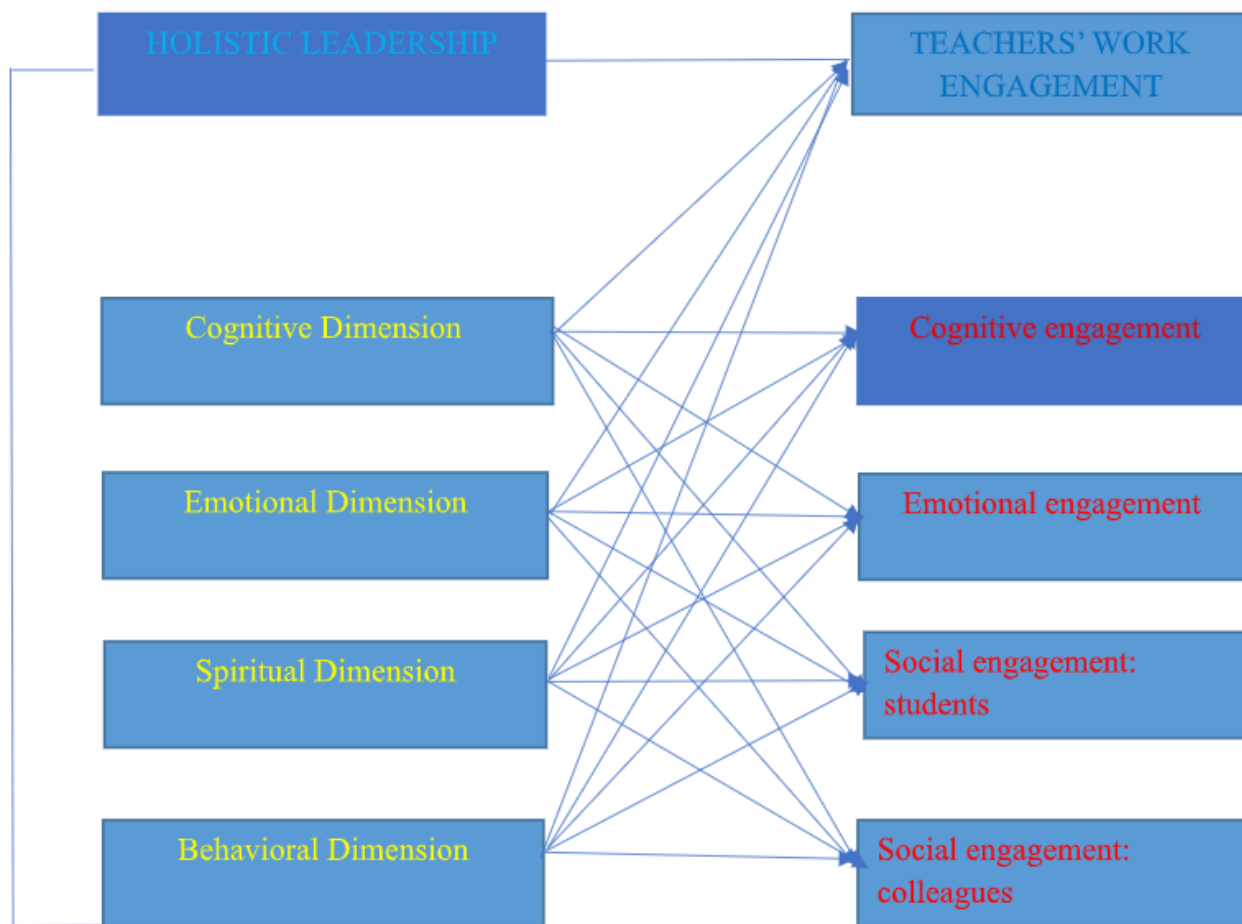


Figure 1: Conceptual model that shows the relationship between holistic leadership and teachers work engagement.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The aim of this study was to examine the relationship between holistic leadership and teachers' work engagement at Adama City Administration Public Secondary Schools. To successfully complete this study, correlational survey research design was employed using a quantitative approach. In relation to this design, Muhammad & Kabir (2018) strengthen that a correlational study determines whether or not two variables are correlated. This means that it helps to study whether an increase or decrease of holistic leadership approach variable corresponds to an increase or decrease teachers' work engagement.

Target Population, Sample Size and Sampling Technique

At Adama City Administration, there are 11 Public Secondary Schools. In this study, the target population included all teachers who are employed at the secondary schools in the study area. In the aforementioned schools, there are a total of 724 teachers. Out of this number, there are 513 male teachers and 211 female teachers. Following Yemane's (1967) formula for determining sample size, the sample size was determined

to be 258. Therefore, using his formula, the researcher drawn a sample as demonstrated below.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{724}{1 + 724(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{257.651}{\approx 258}$$

Where

n = the sample size

N = the population of the study

e = the margin error in the calculation (5%)

Once the sample size was determined, 182 male teachers and 72 female teachers were selected as respondents using a simple random sampling technique in proportion to their respective genders. A simple random sampling is the most common type of sample. It is one in which each person has an equal chance of being selected for participation and which each combination of participants is equally likely (Anderson, 1990).

Data Gathering Instruments

To collect data, developed and adapted questionnaires have been utilized. To provide further clarification, the researcher has developed a likert scale questionnaire to examine the integrated, holistic leadership approach and to assess the extent to which holistic leadership correlates with teachers engagement, the adapted engaged teachers scale, originally developed by Klassen *et al.* (2013), has been employed.

Data Gathering Procedure

At the time of data collection, first the researcher developed likert scale questionnaire for holistic leadership and adapted standardized questionnaire to assess teachers' work engagement and then to ensure the validity and reliability of the developed questionnaire, pilot test was conducted. After, the validity and reliability of the questionnaires checked, before administering, the approval of Adama City Education Office and each school principal and approval of the participants have been maintained. Next to this, the developed and adapted questionnaires were distributed to respondents and collected appropriately.

Data Analysis Techniques

To analyze a data gathered, the quantitative method was employed. Accordingly, the subsequent statistical methods have been used with the help of SPSS version 22. Specifically, for the background details of participants, descriptive frequency and percentage were

employed. Meanwhile, to analyze the relationship between variables and the effect of predictor on dependent variable, correlation and regression inferential statistics were used respectively.

Validity and Reliability of the Instruments

Validity of the questionnaires

According to Kothari (2004), content validity is a measure by which a measuring instrument provides sufficient coverage of a study. Based on this definition, the validity of the content of questionnaires was verified by professionals and experts in the field. According to experts, important remarks on the items should be omitted, supplemented and explained clear, the researcher prepared 31 items for holistic leadership and adapted 16 items for teacher work engagement, and then a reliability test was done.

Reliability test of questionnaires

Prior to data collection, the researcher selected Mojjo town, which is situated 16.81 km away from Adama City Administration. Randomly selected Mojjo Secondary School teachers (41 male and 14 female, total 55 teachers) performed a reliability test to assess whether the data collection tool was consistent and reliable in measuring what the measurement was intended for. As a result, 31 developed questions for holistic leadership and 16 adapted questions for teachers work engagement were distributed to staff as a pilot test and collected to measure the reliability of the instrument.

Table 1: Summary of reliability test Cronbach's alpha values

SL	Variable of the study	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha Value
I	Holistic Leadership	31	0.935
1	Cognitive dimension of leaders	8	0.911
2	Emotional dimension of leaders	9	0.913
3	Spiritual dimension of leaders	10	0.895
4	Behavioral dimension of leaders	4	0.945
II	Teachers' works engagement	16	0.901
1	Cognitive Engagement	4	0.879
2	Emotional Engagement	4	0.847
3	Social Engagement: Students	4	0.965
4	Social Engagement: Colleagues	4	0.898

Source: Own Survey, computed in SPSS version 22

Table 1 presents the results of the reliability analysis using Cronbach's alpha for the examined variables. The overall Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the holistic leadership scale, which comprises 31 items, was 0.935, indicating excellent internal consistency. Each of the four dimensions of holistic leadership also demonstrated high reliability. Similarly, the scale measuring teachers' work engagement, consisting of 16 items, demonstrated high internal consistency with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.901. The sub-dimensions of work engagement also reflected satisfactory to excellent reliability. Overall, these results indicate that all scales and sub scales used in the study are highly reliable for

measuring the intended constructs, thereby providing the researcher with substantial validation regarding the dependability of the data collected through the questionnaires.

Ethical Consideration

Ethical issues like voluntary participation, informed consents, risk of harms, confidentiality, and anonymity have been taken into considerations in the research work. Accordingly, respondents were not forced to participate in the study, they were fully informed about the procedures and were asked for their consent to participate, they were also assured that identified

information would not be made available to anyone who is not directly involved in the study.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Out of the 724-target population, the researcher selected 258 (182 males and 76 females) respondents as a sample. Questionnaires were administered to 258

teachers. From the questionnaires distributed to respondents, 9 (3.5%) were not returned hence, were not included in the data Analysis. Therefore, from the 258 questionnaires distributed, 249 (96.5 %) were used for data analysis.

This section describes the background information of respondents. It covers respondents' sex, age, level of education and year of service.

Table. 2: Background information summary of respondents

No	Variables	Frequency	Percent
1	Sex	Male	176
		Female	73
		Total	249
2	Age	20-30	94
		30-40	103
		40-50	21
		> 50	29
		Total	249
3	Level of education	Diploma	-
		Degree	197
		Masters	52
		Total	249
4	Year of service	Less than 5 years	42
		5-10 years	82
		10-15 years	43
		15-20years	22
		> 20 years	60
		Total	249

As observed in table 2 above, despite the fact that the number of male teacher respondents greatly exceeds the number of female respondents, the number of female respondents is still significant. This means that in terms of the schools' sex category, the attempt to balance has allowed for an honest representation of the categories. The second variable depicted in the table above is the age group of the respondents. Accordingly, there were 94 (37.8%) respondents aged 20 to 30, and 103 respondents (41.4%) in the 30 to 40 years old category. Furthermore, 21 respondents were categorized as being 40 to 50 years old, and 29 respondents (11.6%) were above 50 years old. From this it can be concluded that although the majority of teacher respondents are in the young and early adulthood stages, there are also middle-aged and older teachers in the schools. This highlights the presence of teachers from different age groups in the schools and adds another perspective to the study.

The third variable in the background information in the table above is the educational level of the participants. Out of the total of 249 participants, 197 respondents, accounting for 79.1%, held a Bachelor's degree, and while the remaining 52 participants, making up 20.9%, held a Master's degree. But, had no a diploma holder. These statistics clearly indicate that, in terms of education level, although the majority of teachers need to upgrade their degree to a Master's, they still meet the criteria to teach secondary school students. The final factor in the table above is the year of service of the participants. Regarding the year of service, 42 participants (16.9%) served for less than five years, 82 participants (32.9%) served for 5-10 years, 43 participants (17.3%) served for 10-15 years, 22 participants (8.8%) served for 15-20 years, and 60 participants (24.1%) served for more than twenty years. Overall, the provided data on the background information of the participants clearly covered sex, age, educational level, and years of service variables, which helped in conducting a fair examination of the study.

Table 3: Correlation Analysis

		SLCOGD	SLEMD	SLSD	SLBD	TCOGE	TEMOE	TSOES	TSOEC
School Leaders Cognitive Dimension	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.830**	.763**	.693**	.343**	.220**	.278**	.352**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	249	249	249	249	249	249	249	249
School Leaders Emotional Dimension	Correlation Coefficient	.830**	1.000	.762**	.684**	.443**	.321**	.368**	.346**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	249	249	249	249	249	249	249	249
School Leaders Spiritual Dimension	Correlation Coefficient	.763**	.762**	1.000	.693**	.405**	.274**	.348**	.271**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	249	249	249	249	249	249	249	249
School Leaders Behavioral Dimension	Correlation Coefficient	.693**	.684**	.693**	1.000	.362**	.269**	.301**	.291**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	249	249	249	249	249	249	249	249
Teachers' Cognitive Engagement	Correlation Coefficient	.343**	.443**	.405**	.362**	1.000	.624**	.736**	.545**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	249	249	249	249	249	249	249	249
Teachers' Emotional Engagement	Correlation Coefficient	.220**	.321**	.274**	.269**	.624**	1.000	.729**	.492**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	249	249	249	249	249	249	249	249
Teachers' Social Engagement with Students	Correlation Coefficient	.278**	.368**	.348**	.301**	.736**	.729**	1.000	.625**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	249	249	249	249	249	249	249	249
Teachers' Social Engagement with Colleagues	Correlation Coefficient	.352**	.346**	.271**	.291**	.545**	.492**	.625**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	249	249	249	249	249	249	249	249
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).									
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).									

Source: Own Survey, computed using SPSS, version 22

Note: School Leaders Cognitive Dimension (**SLCOGD**), School Leaders Emotional Dimension (**SLEMOD**), School Leaders Spiritual Dimension (**SLSD**), School Leaders Behavioral Dimension (**SLBD**), Teachers' Cognitive Engagement (**TCOGE**), Teachers' Emotional Engagement (**TEMOE**), Teachers' Social Engagement with Students (**TSOES**), Teachers' Social Engagement with Colleagues (**TSOEC**)

In the above correlation matrix, we find in each domain of the holistic leadership and teachers variables an understanding of the spearman rho correlation coefficient, P- value of two-tailed test of significance, and the sample size.

We can see that the correlation coefficient between the intellectual domain of holistic leadership and teachers' cognitive engagement was 0.343 and the P value is less than 0.001 (value below 0.001 is displayed as 0.000 in SPSS output). If we look at the correlation coefficient between cognitive domain of holistic leadership and the rest three domains of teachers work engagement, which are the teacher's emotional engagement, teachers' social engagement with students and teachers' social engagement with colleagues is $r=.220$ (P-value 0.000); $r=.278$ (P value 0.000) and $r=.352$ (P value 0.000) respectively.

The second domain of holistic leadership has been investigated to determine whether it is associated with teachers' emotional engagement. Based on the output, the correlation coefficient between the emotional aspect of holistic leadership and teachers' cognitive engagement is 0.443 (p-value is 0.000). However, the correlation coefficient values between the emotional aspect of holistic leadership and the other three areas of teachers' work engagement, namely teachers' emotional engagement, teachers' social engagement with students, and teachers' social engagement with colleagues, is $r=.321$, $r=.368$, and $r=.346$ respectively, with P-values of 0.000 (see table 3 above).

The third dimension of holistic leadership revealed in table 3 above is the spiritual domain of leadership. Therefore, the correlation coefficient between the spiritual dimension of holistic leadership and teachers' cognitive engagement is $r=.405$ and the P

value is 0.000. However, as can be clearly seen in the table above, the correlation coefficient between the spiritual dimension of leaders and teachers' emotional engagement ($r = .274$, $P < 0.001$); the correlation coefficient between the spiritual dimension of holistic leadership and teachers' social engagement with students ($r=.348$, $P < 0.001$) and the correlation coefficient between the spiritual leadership dimension and teachers' social engagement with colleagues is $r=.271$ with P value 0.000.

The Last but not the least, the holistic leadership domain is behavioral dimension of leaders. As can be clearly seen in the output table above, the correlation coefficient values between behavioral dimension of leaders and teachers' cognitive engagement, teachers' emotional engagement, teachers' social engagement with students and teachers' social engagement with colleagues were described as $r=.362$ (P-value 0.000), $r=.269$ (P-value 0.000), $r=.301$ (P-value 0.000) and $r=.291$ (P-value 0.000) respectively.

Table 4: Summary of Regression Analysis

No	Dependent variable	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Sig.
1	Teachers' Cognitive Engagement	.442 ^a	.196	.183	.000 ^b
2	Teachers' Emotional Engagement	.378 ^a	.143	.129	.000 ^b
3	Teachers' Social Engagement with Students	.386 ^a	.149	.135	.000 ^b
4	Teachers' Social Engagement with colleagues	.344 ^a	.118	.104	.000 ^b

Source: Own Survey, computed using SPSS, version 22

Predictors: (Constant), Holistic leadership: Behavioral dimension of leaders, Spiritual dimension of leaders, Cognitive dimension of leaders, Emotional dimension of leaders

The output from Table 4 above summarizes a regression analysis of the study, which focuses on the extent to which holistic leadership influences teachers' work engagement. Regression analysis allows the researchers to predict the specific value of one variable if we know or assume the values of the other variable (Cohen and Holliday, 1982; as cited in Cohen *et al.*, 2007)

As we see on the table above, the first effect size determinant is correlation coefficients (r). Here, r shows the multiple correlation coefficients, and it is the correlation between all of the predictor (holistic leadership) dimensions and each domain of the dependent variable (teachers' engagement). Accordingly, the correlation coefficient value of the holistic leadership and teachers' cognitive engagement is 0.442 and the R square value of 0.196. The next determinant factor of the correlation effect size shown in regression analysis output table above is" the Adjusted R square. As Cohen *et al.* (2007) point out, an adjusted r square is more accurate in determining the effect of predictor on dependent variable and they have advocated that researchers use it. As clearly shown in the output above, the adjusted R square value is 0.183 which accounts 18.3 percent and the P- value is $0.000 < \alpha$ level 0.001.

The second correlation effect of holistic leadership revealed in the table above focused on teachers' emotional engagement. Accordingly, the adjusted R square value is 0.129 that accounts 12.9 percent of the dependent variable with P –value $0.000 < \alpha$ value 0.001.

The third dependent variable that helps to demonstrate the effect of holistic leadership is teachers' social engagement with students. As can be seen in Table 4 above, the adjusted R square correlation value between the two variables is 0.135, which represents 13.5 percent, and the P- value is 0.000.

The fourth output of the regression analysis in the table above is the effect of holistic leadership (predictor) on teacher social engagement with colleagues. As can be seen, the value of the adjusted R-square between the two variables is 0.104 and accounts 10.4 percent and the P-value is $0.000 < \alpha$ value 0.001.

Discussion

Results of correlation demonstrate (see table 3 above), there exists significant positive relationship between Intellectual domain of holistic leadership which shows school leaders cognitive domain and teachers' cognitive engagement $r=.343$; School leaders' intellectual practice and teachers' emotional engagement $r=.220$; School leaders' intellectual practice and teachers' social engagement with students $r=.278$ & School leaders' intellectual practice and teachers' social engagement with colleagues $r=.352$. The other important statistical findings need to be discussed here is that the P-values of cognitive domain holistic leadership and the four domains of teachers' work engagement show 0.000. These findings clearly show that the relationship between school leadership intellectual practice and teachers' emotional work engagement and teachers' social engagement with students have weak positive relationship. However, the significant level mentioned above tells us, the relationship though low in strength, is

highly significant; whereas with a little bit exceeding from this result, the correlation between school leaders' intellectual practice and teachers' cognitive engagement and teachers' social engagement with their colleagues revealed moderately associated and though the relationship, moderate in strength, the p-value result indicates that it is highly significant.

According to Gill (2003) who developed holistic/integrated leadership model, an effective leadership requires the intellectual or cognitive abilities to perceive and understand information, reason with it, imagine possibilities, use intuition, make judgments, solve problems and make decisions. These abilities produce vision, mission (purpose), shared values and strategies for pursuing the vision and mission that 'win' people's minds.

The second holistic leadership domain that the finding revealed was the correlation between school leaders' emotional dimension and teachers' cognitive engagement which shows $r = .443$; School leaders' emotional practice and teachers' emotional engagement $r = .321$; School leaders emotion practice and teachers' social engagement with students $r = .368$ & School leaders' emotional practice and teachers' social engagement with colleagues $r = .346$. And in the same manner the relationship between intellectual domain of holistic leadership and the four teachers work engagement dimensions revealed above, all these p-values are 0.000. This implies that school leaders' emotional practice and teachers work engagement have moderate positive relationship. However, though the relationship is moderate in strength, is highly significant. An Effective leadership requires well-developed emotional intelligence — the ability to understand oneself and other people, display self-control and self-confidence, and to respond to others in appropriate ways. Emotionally intelligent leaders use personal power rather than positional power or authority. Emotional intelligence, in addition to cognitive and spiritual intelligence, is key to identifying and promoting the shared values that support the pursuit of vision, mission and strategies and to empowering and inspiring people. Emotionally intelligent leaders 'win people's hearts' (Gill, 2003).

The third correlation finding was revealed between spiritual dimension of holistic leadership and teachers work engagement. As the finding clearly shows, the correlation coefficients of spiritual practice of school leaders and teachers emotional work engagement and teachers' social engagement with their colleagues are $r = .274$ and $r = .271$ respectively and p- value 0.000 implies that there is weak positive correlation between the two variables. Though the strength shows weak, but statistically it is highly significant. The relationship between spiritual domain of school leaders' holistic leadership practice and the rest two teachers work engagement dimensions (see table 3 above) coefficient

fell between $r = .30$ to $r = .49$ and p –value is 0.000. This implies that the two variables have moderate positive correlation and statistically highly significant. The spiritual dimension of leadership concerns the yearning for meaning and a sense of worth that animate people in what they seek and do. Meaning that effective leadership 'wins people's souls' (Gill, 2003).

The last but not least correlational finding in this research was between the behavioral aspect of holistic school leadership practice and the engagement of teachers in their work. In accordance with this, the behavioral leadership was linked to the cognitive engagement of teachers, which was indicated by a correlation coefficient of $r = .362$. It was also associated with the emotional engagement of teachers ($r = .269$, $P < 0.001$), the social engagement of teachers with students ($r = .301$, $P < 0.001$), and the social engagement of teachers with their colleagues ($r = .291$, $P < 0.001$). Based on these correlation findings, we can conclude that the behavioral dimension of holistic leadership in secondary schools has a weak positive association with the emotional engagement of teachers and their social engagement with colleagues. On the other hand, the behavioral holistic school leadership practice has a moderate positive correlation with the cognitive engagement of teachers and their social engagement with students. According to Gill (2003), the essential behavioral skills of leadership encompass both employing and reacting to emotion, such as through nonverbal communication (body language), they also involve expressing oneself in alternate ways through written communication, verbal expression, and attentive listening using personal power and through physical behavior, for instance MBWA ('managing by walking around').

To conclude the discussion given regarding the relationship between holistic leadership (cognitive, emotional, spiritual, and behavioral dimensions) and teachers' work engagement, the results from all dimensions indicated that, despite being low and modest, there exists a positive and significant correlation between holistic school leadership (in all dimensions) and teachers' work engagement in general secondary schools. This suggests that effective work engagement of teachers is positively linked to a holistic leadership that encompasses all dimensions (holistic/integrated approach) rather than a single leadership style. This is supported by Lowe (2012), who claimed that employee engagement, which is a result of leadership, is strengthened when a leader establishes a direct relationship with employees. In addition to Lowe's findings, Bakker and Schaufeli (2008) found that employees who have positive interactions with their leaders experience higher levels of engagement.

The second major findings discussed in this section is the regression result of the study. Accordingly, the impact of holistic leadership (predictor) on teachers'

job engagement (teachers' cognitive engagement, teachers' emotional engagement, and teachers' social engagement with students and teachers' social engagement with colleagues) has been discussed as follows. As shown in the regression results in Table 4 above, the impact of comprehensive leadership on: teachers' cognitive engagement (adjusted R-square 0.183, accounts 18.3% & P-value $0.000 < 0.001$), teachers' emotional engagement (adjusted R-square 0.129, showing 12.9% & P-value 0.000), teachers' social engagement with students (adjusted R-square 0.135, accounts 13.5 % & P-value $0.000 < \alpha 0.001$), as the effect level of the adjusted R-square values proposed by Muijs (2022), clearly shows the adjusted R square and P-values described above, holistic leadership (predictor) has a modest positive effect on teachers work engagement and it is significant. To strengthen this, Burch and Guarana (as cited in Grant, 2019) examined the influence of leaders on their followers' engagement and introduced the leader-follower relationship quality (LMX) as a predictor of follower engagement.

CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATION AND IMPLICATION

Conclusion

Based on the main findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn.

According to the findings presented in the study, the four domains of holistic leadership in schools (intellectual dimension, emotional dimension, spiritual dimension, and behavioral dimension) have a moderate positive correlation with teachers' cognitive engagement and teachers' social engagement with students. On the other hand, the holistic leadership domains and teachers' emotional engagement and teachers' social engagement with colleagues have a low positive association between variables, but it is highly significant (refer to Table 3). Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a significant positive relationship between holistic leadership and teachers' work engagement in secondary schools.

In relation to the regression findings of the study, in accordance with the suggested level of effect indicated by Muijs (2022) for adjusted R square value, the results clearly demonstrated that the effect of the predictor (holistic leadership) on the four domains of teachers' work engagement (cognitive engagement, emotional engagement, social engagement with students, and social engagement with colleagues) was relatively modest, but positive and highly significant (See Table 4). From this, the researcher concluded that while a modest effect of holistic school leadership on teachers' work engagement was revealed in the investigation at secondary schools, its effect is considered to be highly significant and predictable.

Recommendation

Based on the conclusions drawn, the following recommendations were forwarded

Recommendation to school leaders and teachers

The success of any educational system at all levels heavily depends on the effective implementation of its programs by teachers. Sustaining and enhancing educational standards can only be achieved through the efforts of teachers, making them the central figure within the school environment. Among the numerous factors influencing employee engagement, leadership plays a pivotal role. As suggested by the developer of holistic leadership models, the researcher strongly believes that for leaders to effectively influence employee engagement, they must address the cognitive, emotional, spiritual, and behavioral dimensions of leadership through an integrated approach. Given that educational institutions are inherently centers of learning with complex tasks, the leadership within these institutions must be capable of significantly influencing teachers' engagement in their work. While the current study provides valuable insights, it highlights the need for a stronger and more direct relationship between school leaders and teachers' work engagement. Leaders who nurture enthusiasm and foster positive workplace relationships can significantly enhance employee engagement, leading to improved productivity and engagement (Hamid & D'Silva, 2014).

Therefore, school leaders are encouraged to adopt a holistic leadership approach that integrates cognitive, emotional, spiritual, and behavioral dimensions into their practices. This integrated approach is shown to have a positive effect on teachers' work engagement, especially their cognitive and social engagement with students. School leaders should focus on developing their leadership competencies in these four domains to foster a more engaging and collaborative environment for teachers. Additionally, emotional intelligence and interpersonal communication skills should be prioritized to strengthen emotional and social engagement among staff members and students.

For teachers, it is recommended that they actively engage in leadership strategies that promote personal and professional growth in these areas. Teachers should seek opportunities for professional development that enhance their cognitive, emotional, spiritual, and behavioral engagement with their students and colleagues, contributing to a positive and supportive school climate.

Recommendation to Ministry of Education (MoE) and higher education institutions

To foster a robust connection between school leadership and teachers' work engagement, the Ministry of Education (MoE) should prioritize the inclusion of holistic leadership in educational policies for school

leaders. This holistic approach should be integrated into the MoE's framework. Higher education institutions offering educational and school leadership programs should ensure that their curriculum includes courses on holistic leadership. By integrating intellectual, emotional, spiritual, and behavioral leadership training into curricula, they can better equip future school leaders with the tools needed to foster high levels of engagement among teachers. Additionally, higher education institutions should consider providing specialized training for current school leaders to enhance their ability to implement a holistic leadership approach effectively.

Furthermore, MoE should consider creating policies that support the development of school leaders' holistic leadership capacities through workshops, seminars, and collaborative networks, ensuring that leadership training goes beyond the traditional models to include all four leadership dimensions. This will not only improve teacher engagement but also enhance overall school performance and student outcomes.

Recommendations for Educational and School Leadership Professionals and Researchers

The findings of this study clearly demonstrate a significant positive correlation between holistic leadership and teachers' engagement in their work. However, upon reviewing the existing literature, it becomes evident that prior studies have primarily examined leadership and employee engagement from a general perspective or specifically from a leadership style standpoint. Notably, no study has explored the relationship between school leadership and teachers' work engagement using a holistic/integrated model that encompasses cognitive, emotional, spiritual, and behavioral dimensions. Therefore, it is recommended that educators and researchers further investigate the impact of holistic leadership on teachers' work engagement. This exploration could contribute significantly to the advancement of leadership theories and practices within educational settings.

RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS AND THEORETICAL EXTENSION

Implications for school leaders and teachers

The study underscores the central role of school leaders in fostering teacher engagement. Teachers are the cornerstone of educational success, and their engagement in the workplace directly impacts the quality of education delivered. The findings suggest that the traditional focus on cognitive and behavioral aspects of leadership should be expanded to include emotional and spiritual dimensions. Leaders who adopt a holistic leadership approach—one that integrates the intellectual, emotional, spiritual, and behavioral aspects—can inspire deeper engagement in teachers. This can result in heightened motivation, productivity, and a positive school environment. For school leaders, the implication is clear: fostering strong, empathetic, and multi-

dimensional relationships with teachers is essential to building a motivated and engaged workforce. By emphasizing emotional intelligence, spiritual alignment with the school's mission, and behavioral modeling of engagement, leaders can create a conducive environment for teachers to thrive.

Implication for policy

From a policy perspective, the study's findings call for the Ministry of Education (MoE) to prioritize the development of holistic leadership in its educational frameworks. The MoE should support the integration of this model into leadership development programs, ensuring that school leaders are equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to foster teacher engagement in diverse and impactful ways. The inclusion of holistic leadership courses in the curricula of higher education institutions offering leadership training can help prepare future leaders to meet the evolving needs of schools. Furthermore, providing opportunities for on-the-job training in community service allows leaders to develop practical, real-world leadership skills that they can directly apply to enhance teacher engagement. These policy shifts can help create a more engaged and productive teaching workforce across the educational system.

Implication for research

The findings also present an important opportunity for future research. The study points to a significant gap in the existing literature: no prior studies have specifically examined the relationship between school leadership and teachers' work engagement through a holistic leadership lens. Researchers are encouraged to explore this gap by further investigating how leaders can effectively integrate cognitive, emotional, spiritual, and behavioral dimensions of leadership to foster teacher engagement. Such studies would provide deeper insights into the specific mechanisms through which holistic leadership affects teachers' work attitudes and behaviors. Additionally, future research could investigate the long-term impact of holistic leadership on teacher retention, student outcomes, and overall school climate.

Theoretical extension

The study adds to the theoretical understanding of holistic leadership by showing its application in the school context. It suggests that leaders who address not only the cognitive aspects but also the emotional, spiritual, and behavioral dimensions of leadership can have a profound effect on teacher engagement. This offers an extension of existing leadership models that tend to focus on transactional or transformational leadership styles. By emphasizing an integrated approach, this research could lead to a more robust conceptualization of leadership theory, expanding its boundaries to include the emotional and spiritual dimensions of leadership in educational settings.

The findings also expand the theoretical understanding of work engagement. While previous research has primarily focused on the cognitive and behavioral aspects of engagement, this study's inclusion of emotional and spiritual dimensions opens up new avenues for understanding how engagement manifests in teachers. The study suggests that work engagement is not only a cognitive or behavioral state but also involves emotional and spiritual connections with one's work. This could lead to a more nuanced understanding of work engagement, especially in fields like education where teachers' emotional and spiritual connections to their work can play a pivotal role in their level of engagement.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to acknowledge Hawassa University Department of Educational Planning and Management, Adama City Administration Education office, Principals of Public Secondary Schools, and the teachers who were directly involved in this study for their contribution to the accomplishment of my study

DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares that there are no conflicts of interest related to the manuscript entitled "*The Relationship between Holistic Leadership and Teachers' Work Engagement in Public Secondary Schools, Adama City Administration, Ethiopia*," submitted to *Indiana Journal of Economics and Business Management*.

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