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LEARNING COMMUNITIES AND MEDIATED BY TEACHERS'
BEHAVIOR TOWARD STUDENT LEARNING: A CONCEPTUAL
FRAMEWORK**Thay Sovannpitou¹, Sam Rany^{2*}, Keo Ratanak³¹ Postgraduate School, National University of Battambang, Cambodia
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This work is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)**Abstract:**

Cambodia's Royal Government has set ambitious goals to improve educational quality as part of its vision of becoming a middle-income country by 2030 and a developed nation by 2050. Initiatives such as standardizing school models and implementing school-based management are critical to meeting these goals. To effectively improve educational quality, it is necessary to investigate the factors that improve the learning environment for Cambodian students. While previous research on school leadership in Cambodia is limited, extensive studies have been conducted in Western and some Asian countries. Drawing on established research models developed by prominent scholars, this study aims to conceptualize the influence of school principals' leadership styles on professional learning communities (PLCs) mediated by teachers' behaviors. The literature suggests that certain leadership styles significantly enhance PLCs and, consequently, contribute to improved student learning outcomes. Specifically, four leadership styles—instructional, transformational, distributed, and servant leadership—are identified as having a positive impact on PLCs and are hypothesized to influence teachers' behaviors, thereby facilitating student learning. This paper proposes a conceptual framework for identifying ten predictor variables influencing high school principals in Cambodia's education system. These predictors are based on a thorough review of theoretical models of school leadership, PLCs, and the interactions between school leaders and teachers' behaviors. The proposed model attempts to clarify the intricate relationships between instructional leadership, transformational leadership, distributed leadership, servant leadership, professional learning

communities, teacher behaviors, and, ultimately, student learning outcomes. By examining the proposed conceptual model, this study hopes to provide insights into effective leadership practices in Cambodian high schools, as well as guidance for policymakers and educational stakeholders on how to foster a conducive learning environment conducive to academic success.

Keywords:

Instructional Leadership, Transformational Leadership, Distributed Leadership, Servant Leadership, And Professional Learning Communities (Plcs)

Introduction

After the end of the civil war, which lasted more than 25 years, the number of upper secondary schools and the student enrolment rate have increased over the last two decades, but some problems related to educational quality, educational resources, school reform and school principals still exist. Currently, there are 13,681 public schools, 4,563 preschools, 7,306 primary schools, 1,253 lower secondary schools, 35 upper secondary schools, and 524 high schools for all of Cambodia (Sam, et al., 2012a; Sam, et al., 2012b; Hang, 2022). The Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) and educational reform were used to ensure the quality of education at all levels and all-around Cambodia. The Rectangular Strategy IV of the RGC and Educational Strategic Plan 2019-2023 mentioned the following: (1) Ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all and (2) ensuring the effective leadership and management of educational officials at all levels. The Ministry of Education Youth and Sport (MoEYS) has developed a culture of lifelong learning and continuous professional development (CPD) framework for teachers and school principals to ensure and improve their expertise (knowledge, skills, attitudes and behavior) and qualifications through their career path (Hang, 2019b, 2019a).

Effective schools rely heavily on the collaborative efforts of teachers working together to improve their practice and student learning. Professional learning communities (PLCs) provide a structured platform for such collaboration, fostering collective responsibility for student success. However, the effectiveness of PLCs can be significantly influenced by the leadership style of the school principal (Harris et al., 2017). This case study investigates the influences of school principals' leadership styles on professional learning communities (PLCs), with a specific focus on how these styles mediate teachers' behaviors within high schools in Cambodia's north-western provinces.

While research has explored the connection between leadership styles and PLCs (e.g., Impact of School Principals' Leadership on Teaching Quality and Students' Achievement: A Case Study of Primary Schools in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, in 2022), a critical gap exists in understanding this dynamic within the specific context of Cambodian high schools, particularly in the north-western region. This study aims to address this gap by examining how different leadership styles, such as transformational or instructional leadership styles, influence the formation and functioning of PLCs in these schools.

Furthermore, this research delves deeper by considering teachers' behaviors as a mediator. We explore how principals' leadership styles impact teachers' willingness to actively participate, collaborate, and engage in professional development within PLCs. Understanding this

mediating factor can provide valuable insights into how leadership styles ultimately influence the effectiveness of PLCs in driving school improvement.

This case study also acknowledges the unique challenges faced by the Cambodian educational system, including resource limitations and teacher training needs. We will consider these contextual factors and how they might influence the relationships among leadership styles, PLCs, and teachers' behaviors.

Aim

The aim of this conceptual paper is to identify and propose the principal predictor variables that influence professional learning communities (PLCs) and are mediated by teachers' behaviors in high schools in Northwest Cambodia. Specifically, this paper seeks to delineate the relevant variables related to School Principals' Leadership Styles that influence PLCs mediated by teachers' behaviors. By synthesizing existing research and theoretical frameworks, this study aims to shed light on the factors shaping the dynamics of PLCs within the educational landscape of Northwest Cambodia. This paper aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of effective leadership strategies and their impact on teacher practices and student outcomes, thereby informing educational policy and practice in the region.

Research Method

This conceptual paper systematically examines and summarizes existing data sources from related research studies, review papers, academic publications, public organization sources, instructional resources and empirical investigations. By synthesizing documents related to the school's principal leadership styles, professional learning communities and teacher behavior, this study provides a conceptual framework that focuses on the impact of the school's principal leadership styles on professional learning communities and is mediated by teachers' behavior toward student learning. This conceptual paper reviews a variety of academic papers to identify the influence of a school's leadership styles on professional learning communities and how this influence is mediated by teachers' behavior. The review documents from 2005 to 2023 and ensures that this paper encompasses the recent situation, especially to the current situation, of Cambodian education.

Literature Review

Context of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)

Professional learning communities (PLCs) serve as a dynamic framework to foster collaborative learning among colleagues within an organizational setting. Often utilized in educational contexts, PLCs organize teachers into practice-based working groups, extending classroom practices into a community-oriented approach. By involving community stakeholders in school affairs, PLCs enhance curriculum development, learning tasks, and overall engagement for students, teachers, and administrators (Aina, 2022).

At its core, PLCs empower teachers to address contextual challenges and develop actionable strategies tailored to their unique concerns. Originating from the necessity for teachers to address school-related issues, PLCs have evolved into instrumental platforms for professional dialog and growth (Tayag, 2020).

PLCs play a pivotal role in cultivating a culture of collaboration, enabling groups of teachers to critically examine and refine their practices to enhance student learning outcomes (Ghani et al., 2020; Haiyan & Allan, 2020). Hord identifies five dimensions crucial to effective PLCs, namely, supportive and shared leadership, shared values and vision, collective learning, supportive conditions, and shared practice. However, in the Cambodian context, the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sport (MoEYS) has prioritized three dimensions: collaboration, student learning outcomes, and reflection.

Within PLCs, school leadership is a socially constructed concept that emphasizes administrator-teacher collaboration and mutual support in defining professional roles. Principals in PLCs are tasked with promoting teacher competency, deviating from hierarchical models, and upholding the school's social legitimacy through concerted efforts toward improving student learning outcomes (Williams, 2006).

Facilitating teacher leadership, PLCs empower educators to collaborate on professional tasks, analyze student data, and assess learning outcomes (Wilson, 2016). The quality of individual teachers remains paramount in driving student learning, with PLCs serving as a strategic approach to ensuring effective teaching practices in classrooms (Aina, 2022).

The collaborative nature of PLCs encourages teachers to share ideas, refine teaching practices, and ultimately enhance student learning outcomes. School leaders bear the responsibility of cultivating and supporting PLCs, while also facilitating teachers' continuing professional development to nurture lifelong learners (Dai, 2022).

In summary, PLCs play a significant role in educational development and improvement, fostering school change and enhancing teachers' ongoing professional growth. Through collaborative efforts within PLCs, educators can collectively drive positive change and elevate the quality of education.

Leadership Styles

Leadership within schools encompasses a multifaceted array of responsibilities aimed at fostering a conducive learning environment and driving student achievement. School leaders play a pivotal role in articulating a shared vision and sense of purpose, setting high performance expectations, modeling sample behaviors, designing effective teaching and learning programmes, fostering effective teamwork, and distributing leadership responsibilities among staff members. Moreover, they are tasked with understanding and developing individuals, establishing school routines and norms, monitoring performance, facilitating connections with parents and the community, and recognizing and rewarding achievements (Barber et al., 2010).

The efficacy of school leadership is underscored by its direct impact on student achievement and the overall educational environment. Internationally, school leadership has emerged as a key priority in education policy, given its influence on teacher motivation, capacity, and the overall school climate. Effective school leadership is instrumental in enhancing both the efficiency and equity of education systems, with responsibilities grounded in practices aimed at improving teaching and learning environments.

The core responsibilities of school leadership include: (1) supporting, evaluating, and developing teacher quality by strengthening leaders' involvement in curricular decision-

making, providing training in teacher monitoring and evaluation, facilitating teacher professional development, and promoting teamwork among educators; (2) fostering goal-setting, assessment, and accountability through strategic direction setting, developing school plans and goals, promoting data-driven decision-making, and delegating tasks related to assessment and accountability; and (3) enhancing strategic financial and human resource management by improving financial management skills, involving leaders in teacher recruitment decisions, and empowering leadership teams (Pont et al., 2008).

Principals, as school leaders, often adopt various leadership styles, including instructional, democratic, transformational, transactional, distributed, servant, autocratic, or laissez-faire, either individually or in combination. The effectiveness of each leadership style hinges on its alignment with organizational goals and the leader's ability to adapt their attitude and behavior accordingly. Therefore, effective leaders continuously assess their leadership style to ensure its compatibility with organizational objectives and broader educational missions.

Instructional Leadership toward PLCs

Instructional leadership (IL) represents a multifaceted approach that equips educational leaders with both the managerial prowess and visionary leadership skills necessary for the effective functioning of institutions. Originating from discussions in Western countries, IL underscores the pivotal role of principals in sustaining the school's mission and purpose, as elucidated by Lunenburg (2010). Central to this role is ensuring the delivery of quality education and fostering an environment conducive to students' academic achievement. Principals, as articulated by Wanzare (2011), are tasked with understanding teachers' concerns and classroom dynamics, playing a supportive role in improving teaching and learning conditions.

Moreover, IL advocates for the establishment of professional learning communities (PLCs), as highlighted by DuFour (2004), Jones, Morgan, & Harris (2012), and reinforced by Lunenburg (2010). These communities serve as platforms for collaborative learning among educators, facilitating the sharing of best practices and the alignment of instructional strategies with institutional goals. Salleh (2016) further emphasizes the importance of teacher leaders within PLCs, framing IL as a critical component for fostering collaborative relationships and supporting teachers' professional development.

Research by Zheng et al. (2018) and Goddard et al. (2015) underscores the significant impact of IL on PLCs, with principal leadership and teacher collaboration playing pivotal roles in achieving school objectives. Similarly, findings by Hassan et al. (2019) indicate a strong correlation between principals' IL practices and teachers' engagement in PLCs, particularly in the Southern Zone of Malaysia. This finding underscores the influential role of IL in shaping organizational culture and enhancing student learning outcomes.

In essence, IL not only promotes effective instructional practices but also fosters a culture of collaboration and continuous improvement within educational institutions. As principals and teachers unite in their commitment to promoting a quality work culture and enhancing student learning outcomes, they lay the groundwork for meaningful organizational change.

Proposition 1: Instructional Leadership Positively Influences Professional Learning Community (PLCs).***Transformational Leadership toward PLCs***

According to Vanblaeire & Devos (2016), both instructional and transformational leadership styles exert a positive influence on the context of professional learning communities (PLCs). These leadership styles are seen as complementary, working in tandem to cultivate the characteristics essential for successful PLCs. Omar (2017) further underscores the significance of transformational leadership in driving organizational behavior quality improvements and fostering rapid environmental change. Transformational leaders, as highlighted by Omar (2017), prioritize individual needs, skill development, and self-confidence among followers, thus creating an environment conducive to growth and innovation.

Voelkel Jr. (2019) delves into the transformative impact of leadership on PLCs, noting that four out of five transformational leadership variables serve as predictors of more effective PLC teams and stronger collective efficacy. The key to this transformational approach is the creation of structures that facilitate collaborative action and empower teams to make crucial instructional decisions, ultimately enhancing PLC effectiveness. In collaboration with teachers, leaders work toward a shared vision and goals aimed at improving student learning outcomes (Voelkel Jr., 2019).

In essence, both instructional and transformational leadership styles are instrumental in fostering the collaborative culture and collective action necessary for the success of PLCs. By prioritizing individual growth, empowering teams, and aligning efforts toward common objectives, leaders play a pivotal role in driving positive change within educational institutions.

Proposition 2: Transformational Leadership Significantly Influences The Professional Learning Community (PLC)***Distributed Leadership toward PLCs***

Distributed leadership (DL) embodies a paradigm in which leadership practices are dispersed among multiple individuals; this concept is encapsulated by terms such as "leader plus" or "shared leadership," as noted by Hem (2022). Abdullah (2020) highlights the significant influence of DL on all dimensions of professional learning communities (PLCs) among school leaders in Johor, Malaysia, emphasizing its transformative potential under favorable conditions. DL offers a framework for enhancing school management, fostering autonomy, promoting teamwork, and engaging participants in organizational decision-making, leveraging the collaboration of numerous leaders with formal and informal capacities. School principals play a pivotal role in DL due to their intimate knowledge of staff, school dynamics, and organizational culture, enabling effective resource management (Calderon, 2023).

According to Harris and Spillane, DL embodies shared leadership, where leaders and staff share responsibilities to achieve school goals, foster shared ownership and improve overall performance (Noor et al., 2022). Gronn's theory distinguishes two DL behavioral contexts: distributed leadership, defined as a pattern that transcends individual leaders, and collective action within organizations, emphasizing collaboration, expertise sharing, and teamwork. DL

prioritizes engagement and practices over individual actions, focusing on distributing leadership across various levels of the organization (Parveen et al., 2023).

Characterized by autonomy, collaboration, trust, openness, and innovation, DL enriches the school environment, stimulating teachers' creativity and enthusiasm and enhancing school efficiency and performance (Laylo & Chua, 2020; Wang & Saluba, 2023). The positive impact of DL on PLCs hinges on aligning values, objectives, and practices with the school culture to support teamwork and foster a sense of collective responsibility among staff. Teachers, viewing themselves as learners, play a vital role in driving school vision and improvement and are supported by leaders who cultivate an environment of trust, collaboration, and mutual respect (Alkrdem, 2020).

In essence, DL serves as a catalyst for transforming schools into PLCs by empowering staff to participate, innovate, and engage with new knowledge, underlining the importance of leadership support for learning and goal realization (Alkrdem, 2020). Through teamwork, communication, and a shared commitment to organizational growth, DL fosters a culture of collaboration and continuous improvement, ultimately enhancing school effectiveness and student outcomes.

Proposition 3: Distributed Leadership Positively Influences The Professional Learning Community (PLC)

Servant Leadership toward PLCs

Servant leadership (SL), as articulated by Robert Greenleaf, marks a departure from traditional authoritative leadership styles, emphasizing the leader's role as a servant first. The essence of SL lies in fostering collaboration, trust, foresight, and ethical empowerment within the organization (Stewart, 2017). Central to SL is the development and empowerment of individuals, coupled with expressions of humanity, authenticity, and stewardship (Davis, 2017). This approach prioritizes the needs and interests of others, both within the organization and within the broader community, manifesting through attentive listening, empathy, and a commitment to individual growth and community building (Eva et al., 2019; DMin, 2018).

Greenleaf outlined ten characteristics of servant leadership, namely, listening, empathy, persuasion, and commitment to people's growth, reflecting a genuine concern for others' well-being and influence (Elliott, 2021). Research by Hai & Van (2021) underscores the growing popularity of SL across various sectors, attributing its success to its ability to foster trust, loyalty, and active employee engagement in organizational development efforts.

The impact of servant leadership extends to professional learning communities (PLCs), as noted by Elliott (2021), with SL positively influencing teachers' engagement and professional development. By prioritizing the needs of others and promoting a culture of collaboration and empowerment, servant leaders play a crucial role in enhancing teachers' self-efficacy, job satisfaction, and overall organizational effectiveness.

In summary, servant leadership significantly influences professional learning communities and plays a vital role in shaping teachers' behaviors and attitudes. By embodying principles of empathy, collaboration, and stewardship, servant leaders contribute to a positive work

environment where individuals feel valued, motivated, and empowered to achieve common goals.

Proposition 4: Servant Leadership Has A Positive Influence On Professional Learning Community (PLC)

Instructional Leadership Toward Teachers' Behaviors

Instructional leadership (IL) plays a crucial role in fostering teachers' professional development and improving learning outcomes. Effective principal leadership serves as a cornerstone for school quality enhancement, with IL being a systematic factor in driving educational quality and facilitating school change to achieve desired student learning outcomes. Principals, as instructional leaders, fulfill various roles in examining effective student learning and enhancing classroom instruction and direction, as highlighted by Heck (1992) and Whitaker (1997) and further expounded upon by Akram et al. (2017).

According to Hallinger (2003), instructional leaders focus on several key areas, including creating a shared sense of purpose with clear academic goals, fostering continuous capacity development among stakeholders, and establishing an environment of high expectations and innovation in teaching and learning. Additionally, IL involves coordinating the curriculum, monitoring student learning outcomes, organizing continuous staff development activities, and embodying desired school cultural values, as outlined by Hallinger (2003). The effectiveness of IL lies in the principal's ability to set clear academic goals, motivate staff and students, monitor progress, and align teaching and learning activities to achieve these objectives, as emphasized by Aslam et al. (2022) and Ismail et al. (2018).

The central role of teachers cannot be overstated because they work directly with students and possess valuable insights into their cognitive abilities, attitudes, and needs. Teachers engage in continuous capacity development to enhance their knowledge and teaching skills and collaborate within professional learning communities (PLCs) to improve curriculum themes, agreements, and plans, as noted by Aslam et al. (2022). Research by Ratts (2015) indicates that PLC processes positively impact student learning outcomes, while studies by Ho et al. (2016) and Lee et al. (2011) demonstrate the significant relationship between school-based PLC practices and teacher effectiveness.

Furthermore, IL influences individual teacher efficacy through teacher communities, as mediated by principal leadership, as highlighted by Zheng et al. (2018). Principals, through collaborative efforts and fostering trust, communication, and participation with teachers, play vital roles in supporting classroom instruction, addressing student learning needs, and promoting effective teaching methods, as noted by Ozdemir, Sahin, and Ozturk (2020) and Tep (2022).

In summary, IL is correlated with teachers' classroom teaching performance and behaviors, ultimately contributing to improved student learning outcomes. Effective IL involves collaboration, trust-building, and continuous support for teachers' professional growth, highlighting the interconnectedness of leadership and instructional practices in driving educational excellence.

Proposition 5: Instructional Leadership Has A Positive Influence On Teachers' Behavior Toward Students Learning Outcomes.

Transformation Leadership Toward Teachers' Behaviors

Transformational leadership (TL) represents a dynamic process in which leaders and followers mutually support each other to foster higher levels of morality and motivation, ultimately leading to organizational transformation and improved performance. Rooted in theories by Burns (1978) and Bass (1985), TL is characterized by leaders who empower and inspire teachers and teacher groups toward school change and teaching improvement, stimulating enthusiasm, creativity, and a sense of responsibility among employees (Hu et al., 2015; Zhang et al., 2022).

TL involves a form of influence that transforms individuals to achieve extraordinary outcomes, elevating both leaders and followers to higher levels of ethical behavior and aspirations (Benis and Nanus, Kouzes and Posner, 2017). Central to TL are five fundamental aspects: setting personal examples, inspiring a shared vision, challenging the status quo, fostering collaboration, and recognizing achievements (Benis and Nanus, Kouzes and Posner, 2017). TL leaders anticipate followers' emotional responses and motivation by working collaboratively with teachers to enhance their capacities and motivation to improve teaching quality and instruction (K. Hamilton, 2021).

Bass (1985) delineates three dimensions of TL: vision building, providing individual support, and offering intellectual stimulation. However, Leithwood and Jantzi (2000) expand on this concept in four dimensions: modeling best practices, setting high performance expectations, creating a productive school culture, and developing structures to foster teacher participation (Vanblaere & Devos, 2016).

Research by Zhang et al. (2022) underscores the significant impact of TL on all components of professional learning communities (PLCs) and teachers' job satisfaction, indicating a positive relationship between TL and PLC components, and teacher behaviors. Studies by Saleem (2015) and Hoque and Raya (2023) further validate the positive relationship between TL and teachers' behaviors, highlighting the transformative influence of TL in fostering organisational growth and enhancing teacher satisfaction.

In summary, TL serves as a catalyst for organizational change and improvement, promoting collaboration, innovation, and motivation among teachers. By inspiring a shared vision, fostering collaboration, and recognizing achievements, TL leaders empower teachers to reach their full potential and drive positive change within educational institutions.

Proposition 6: Transformational Leadership Significantly Influences Teachers' Behaviors Toward Students Learning Outcomes.

Distributed Leadership Toward Teachers' Behavior

Research by Leithwood and Kenneth (1997) indicates a significant positive relationship between distributed leadership (DL) and teachers' behaviors, fostering attributes such as warmth, dependability, teamwork, and interpersonal skills. Jackson (2009) noted a shift in teacher leadership roles with the implementation of professional learning communities (PLCs),

leading to increased engagement and commitment among teachers and school principals toward school improvement and student learning outcomes. DL practices have been shown to facilitate teacher collaboration and enhance teaching and learning effectiveness at the school level, as highlighted by studies by Shakir et al. (2011), Hasanvand et al. (2013), and Yangaiya (2013).

DL plays a vital role in promoting teacher leadership at the school level and fostering reflective dialog, shared values, and collaborative learning environments, as observed by DeMatthews (2014). By practicing democratic and distributed leadership, school principals can reduce conflicts and unite staff members toward shared responsibilities and educational quality improvement, as suggested by Masekoameng & Zengele (2015). The collaborative model of DL empowers both school leaders and teacher leaders, enhancing their confidence and shared authority and promoting understanding and engagement with PLCs, as emphasized by Carleen (2016) and Kurt (2016).

Research by Jamil and Izham (2019) highlights the positive impact of DL on teachers' collective efficacy and PLCs, serving as a significant predictor of teachers' collective efficacy and fostering a culture of shared vision and motivation among teachers. Erturk and Nartgun (2019) emphasize the importance of DL in promoting shared leadership perceptions and fostering a learning culture among teachers, leading to enhanced capacity for school improvement initiatives.

Overall, DL actively engages staff in decision-making processes, encourages innovation, and enhances teachers' capacity to improve teaching and learning outcomes. Teachers perceive themselves as highly efficacious under the positive influence of school principals practicing DL, leading to personal and professional development, as noted by Ali et al. (2021), Brown et al. (2020), and Hem (2022). Distributed leadership promotes teachers' improvement, fosters collaboration, builds trust, and motivates teachers to work toward collective goals, ultimately enhancing teachers' leadership competencies and contributing to school effectiveness and student success, as highlighted by Parveen et al. and Galdames-Calderon (2023).

Proposition 7: Distributed Leadership Has A Positive Influence On Teachers' Behavior Toward Students Learning Outcomes.

Servant Leadership Toward Teachers' Behavior

Spears (2005) highlights the evolving landscape of leadership practices in both profit and nonprofit organizations, where traditional hierarchical approaches are being redefined. Leadership is shifting toward more inclusive, ethical, and caring behaviors, emphasizing teamwork and community engagement in decision-making processes to foster personal growth and organizational quality (Spears, 2005). In the context of Turkey, the impact of servant leadership on teachers' organizational commitment is observed, with its effects being more pronounced in developed Western nations but still influential in developing countries. Organizational commitment, characterized by a strong belief in the organization's goals and values, is crucial for teachers' dedication to their school. School principals play a pivotal role in nurturing teachers' organizational commitment through servant leadership practices, which prioritize valuing, developing, and authenticity (Cerit, 2010).

Stewart (2012) underscores the importance of distributed leadership in improving student achievement, emphasizing the connection between individual leadership and its impact on students and classroom teachers. Service learning and servant leadership complement each other, redefining the role of classroom teachers and enhancing their self-efficacy (T. Stewart, 2012). Research by Caffey (2012) and Aboramadan et al. (2021) demonstrates a positive relationship between servant leadership and affective commitment, mediated by job satisfaction. Both work engagement and affective commitment positively influence academics' job performance, highlighting the importance of servant leadership in promoting teacher effectiveness (Aboramadan et al., 2021; Caffey, 2012; Sam et al., 2013a; Sam et al., 2013b).

Through their emphasis on serving others, servant leaders empower teachers to maximize their effectiveness by improving their personal value, engaging with colleagues, and enhancing classroom leadership and pedagogy (Elliott, 2021; Hai & Van, 2021; Schroeder, 2016; Wong, 2019). Francisco (2022) and Swart et al. (2021) emphasize the role of servant leadership in creating a positive school environment conducive to teacher and learner achievement, fostering trust and collaboration. Meilani and Riyanto (2022) highlighted the positive and significant effects of servant leadership, self-efficacy, and teacher work engagement on improving teachers' work performance and organizational citizenship behavior, further illustrating the transformative potential of servant leadership in educational settings (Meilani & Riyanto, 2022).

Proposition 8: Servant Leadership Has A Positive Influence On Teachers' Behavior Toward Students Learning Outcomes.

The Effect Of Professional Learning Community On Student's Learning Outcome

In summary, after reviewing a variety of previous scholars' research, we found that four leadership styles, namely, instructional, transformational, distributed and servant, play important roles in promote professional learning communities mediated by the teachers' behavior to achieve students' learning outcomes. The four leadership styles are positively and significantly related to PLCs and influence teachers' behavior in establishing shared visions, collaboration, enhancing personal capacity development, promoting instruction and pedagogy for teachers and learners. Teachers' job satisfaction is an important factor for student achievement, as teachers are key influences in teaching and learning in classroom leadership. According to Wilson (2016), teachers play an important role in promoting professional learning community to achieve students' learning outcomes. The relationship between school leaders and teachers strongly impact PLCs through the mediation of teachers' behavioral push toward school goals, and there is a positive correlation between students' learning outcomes and the standardized assessment and teaching practice of collaborative reviews of students' work and teamwork to promote quality of education, especially to improve students' quality (Ratts et al., 2015; Wilson, 2016). Kalkan (2016) and Somprach et al. (2016), showed that professional learning communities positively affect students' achievement, teacher morality, teacher effectiveness and job satisfaction, school culture and environment. The type of teacher practicing in PLCs is significantly related to leadership style, which contributes to teacher development and affects to students' learning outcomes (Akram et al., 2023; Chediak et al., 2018; Kalkan, 2016; Somprach et al., 2016; Talebizadeh et al., 2021). According to Hang (2021), there are many factors that MoEYS has been creating to reach the Cambodian economic and development goal by 2030 and 2050; among these kinds of documents, the professional learning communities (PLCs) were created in 2021 to promote teachers' professional

development and enforce the students' learning outcomes. This PLC book was created by MoEYS and addressing about lifelong learning strategies to collaborate in sharing schedule action research and self-reflection on teaching and learning, especially the engagement of 21st century skills(Hang, 2021a).

Proposition 9: Professional Learning Communities Positively And Significantly Influence Students' Learning Outcomes.

Professional Learning Communities For Student Learning Outcomes Under The Mediation Of Teachers' Behavior

According to Ratts et al. (2015), members of professional learning communities (PLCs) play a crucial role in enhancing the quality of students' achievement, with teachers assuming a pivotal position in driving teaching and learning within classrooms. Teachers' behavior, serving as a mediating factor, has a positive impact on the relationship between PLCs and students' learning outcomes (Ratts et al., 2015). Researchers have identified four significant predictors—learning, transformational, collaborative, and invitational leadership—whose influence on students' learning outcomes is mediated by teachers' participation in PLCs. These leadership dimensions underscore the importance of fostering a collaborative and supportive environment among teachers to enhance student achievement (Buttram & Farley-Ripple, 2016; Reynolds, 2016; Somprach et al., 2016; Tieng et al., 2023).

The effectiveness of PLCs and their impact on students' learning outcomes are further enhanced through teachers' interactions, knowledge sharing, and professional positioning. Additionally, school leaders play a crucial role in promoting students' learning outcomes by actively engaging in and fostering teamwork with teachers (Benoliel & Schechter, 2017; Ghani et al., 2020). Embracing the concept of teacher leadership, which asserts that all organizational members can lead and share leadership responsibilities, is fundamental to building robust PLCs within schools. Teacher leadership serves as the cornerstone of PLCs, emphasizing collaborative learning among teachers to enrich educational strategies, materials, and interactions. Moreover, fostering open dialog between school leaders and teachers regarding school contexts and student learning outcomes within the PLC framework enhances engagement and collaboration, ultimately contributing to the achievement of school goals (AINA, 2022; Haiyan & Allan, 2020; Hang, 2021a; Lin et al., 2018; Talebizadeh et al., 2021; Tayag, 2020; Yin et al., 2019). Teachers' continuous professional development, instructional skills, and knowledge-sharing activities further bolster educational quality within schools. The collaborative and trusting relationship between school leaders and teachers serves as a catalyst for achieving school goals and enhancing students' learning outcomes, especially within sustainable PLCs, which provide ample opportunities for mutual engagement and educational advancement.

Proposition 10: Professional Learning Communities Influence Students' Learning Outcomes Through The Mediation Of Teachers' Behaviors.

Proposed Research Conceptual Framework Model

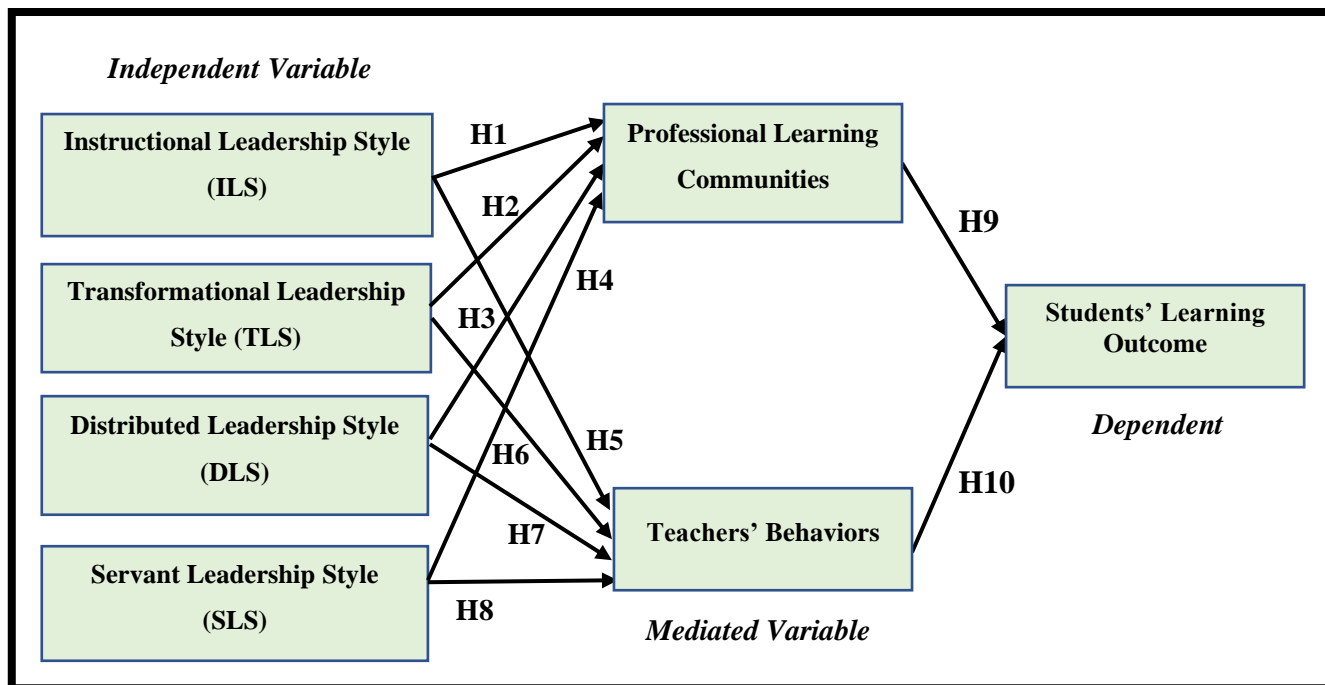


Figure 1: The Conceptual Framework Model

Conclusion

The conceptual research aims to explore the important variables to involved in developing the conceptual framework of the influences of principals' leadership styles on professional learning communities and mediated by teachers' behavior. The perceptions of schools' principals and teachers regarding leadership styles and professional learning communities (PLC) and their impact on teachers' behavior. This study provides insights into key elements for improving schools in Cambodia, particularly focusing on the role of school leaders. Four types of school leaders have a significantly positive impact on the professional learning communities, this effect is mediated by teacher's behavior to achieve students' learning outcomes. These four leaders are instructional, transformational, distributed and servant leadership styles that are correlated with and influence PLCs and TB toward students' learning outcomes. This proposed research model will guide the researcher to go through for various experiences of other countries and add other variables for future empirical study.

By analyzing the research findings, public organizations, especially public high schools, can enhance their effectiveness and efficiency in meeting teachers' job satisfaction and students' learning outcomes, aligning with the Cambodian government's roadmap for 2030 and the demands of the labor market. Additionally, this research will assist school principals in enhancing their ability to improve service quality and collaborate with teachers, parents, authorities, and school support committees to achieve schools' goals effectively. In summary, the outcomes of this research are expected to contribute significantly to the development of school leaders, teachers, and practitioners across different levels of education. Moreover, it will

facilitate the sharing of knowledge and experiences among academic researchers and educational policymakers, fostering continuous improvement in the education sector.

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